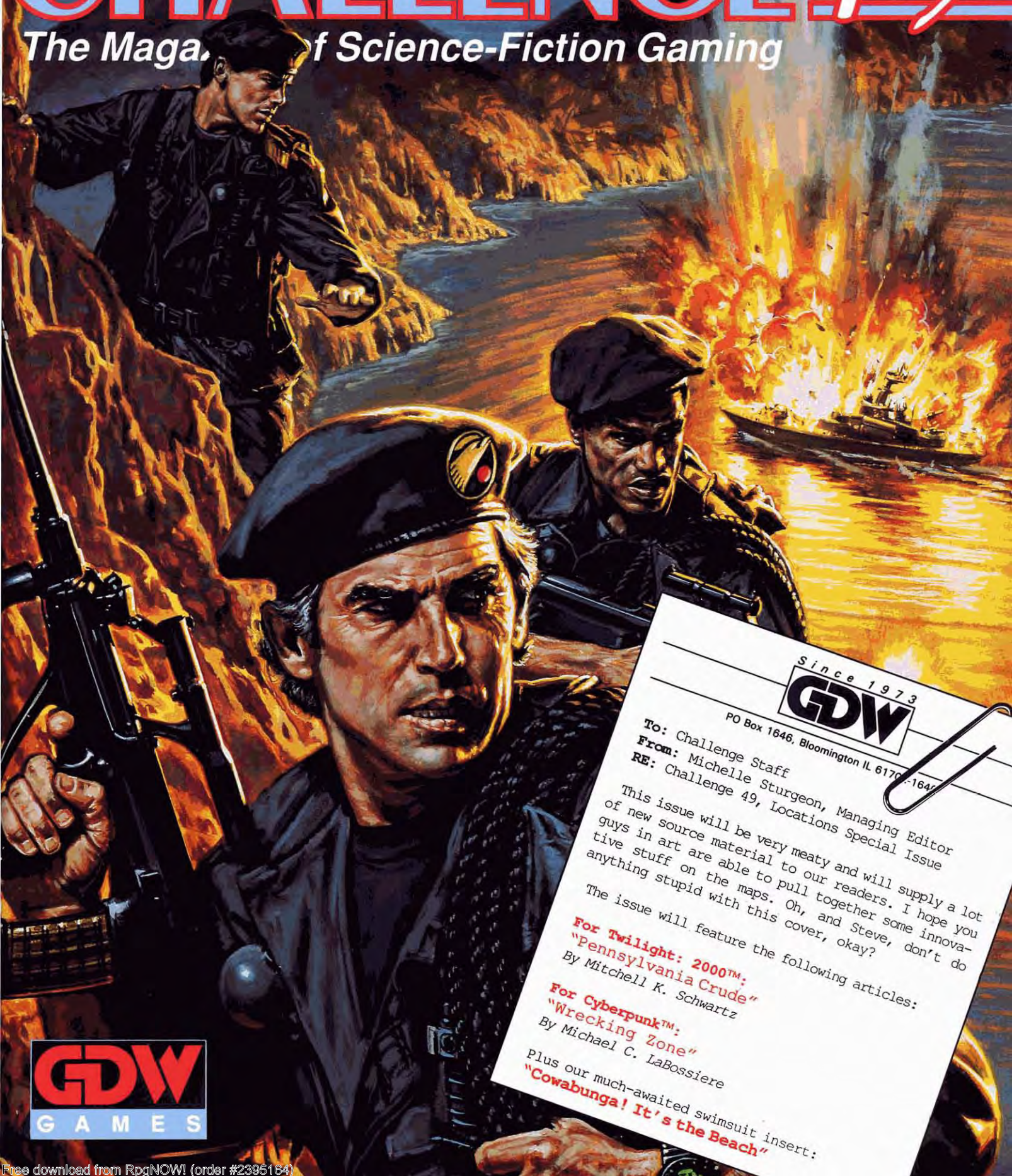


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CHALLENGE 49

The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming



Since 1973
GDW

PO Box 1646, Bloomington IL 61702-1646

To: Challenge Staff
From: Michelle Sturgeon, Managing Editor
RE: Challenge 49, Locations Special Issue

This issue will be very meaty and will supply a lot of new source material to our readers. I hope you guys in art are able to pull together some innovative stuff on the maps. Oh, and Steve, don't do anything stupid with this cover, okay?

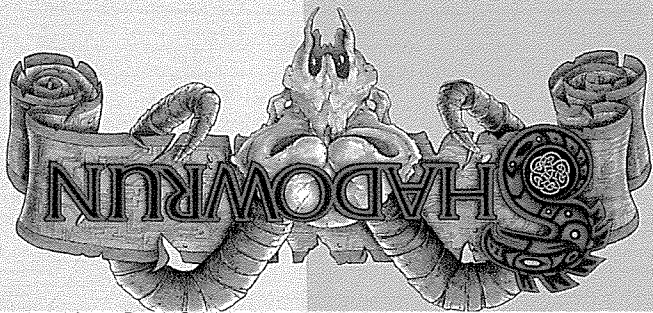
The issue will feature the following articles:

For Twilight: 2000™:
"Pennsylvania Crude"
By Mitchell K. Schwartz

For Cyberpunk™:
"Wrecking Zone"
By Michael C. LaBossiere

Plus our much-awaited swimsuit insert:
"Cowabunga! It's the Beach"

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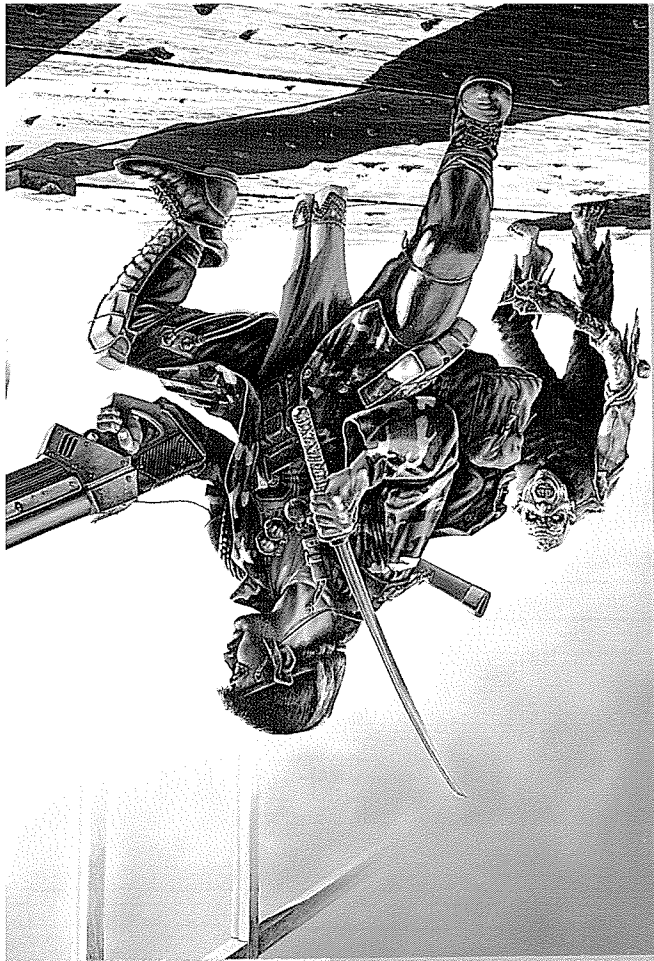
are airfoil grenades, form-fitting body armor, enhanced

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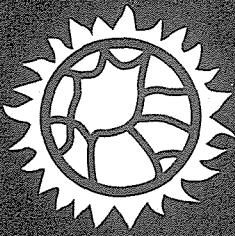
leads through the heart of the deadly Ork underworld, a dark labyrinth

beneath the city where your first wrong move may be your last.

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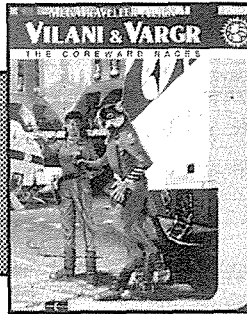
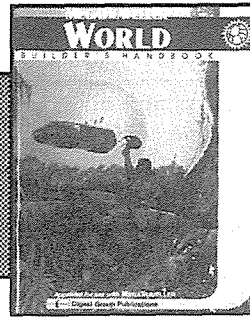
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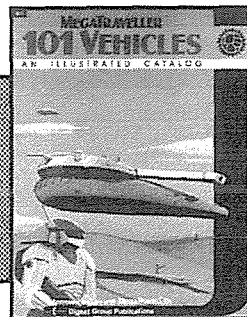
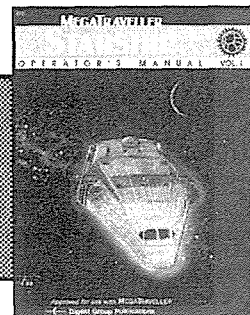


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CHALLENGE

The Magazine of Science-Fiction Gaming

Twilight: 2000

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All you have to do is see the convoy through. If there's no trouble, it's a free ride. Right.
Mitchell K. Schwartz
- 16** **HOW TO: Obtain Maps for Gaming**
Learn where to find maps that suit your specific gaming needs.
Loren K. Wiseman

MegaTraveller

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- 40** **The Dam**
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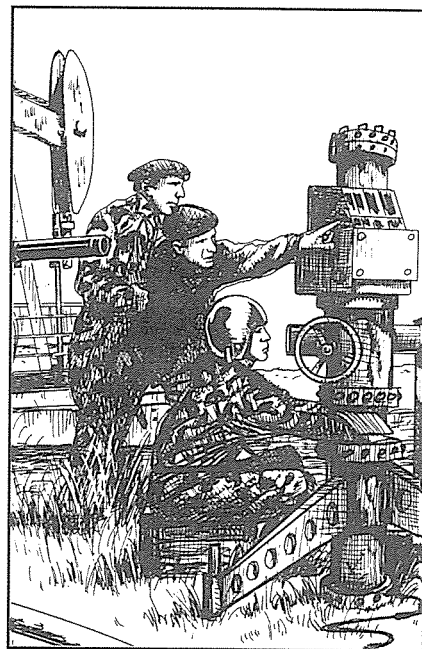
Generate your own gaming environments in this "Mind's Eye" RPG by Rapport Games.

Devin Durham

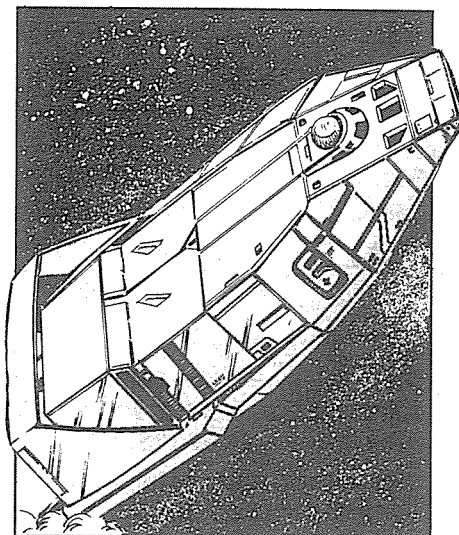
Swimsuit Insert

Cowabunga! It's the Beach

Challenge takes a humorous look at beach locations in this April Fools' swimsuit special.



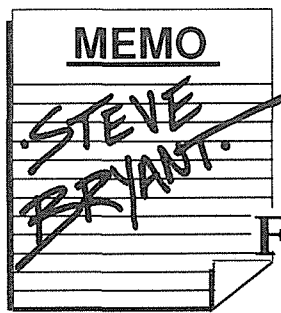
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Insert



From the Management

I realize that my name may be unfamiliar to some of you, but after months of bothering Michelle, Julia, and Loren for an editorial, they've finally conceded. So I'm here in the swimsuit/April Fools' issue to explain just what goes on in the art department at GDW. (April Fool? Hey! Waitamminute! Are they trying to tell me something...?)

Just what do you do around here?

Well, along with fellow Senior Graphic Designer Amy Doubet and Art Assistants LaMont Fullerton and Jeff Kohl, part of my job is to keep improving the look of GDW products in general. You know, flashier covers, bolder diagrams—the works. If you've checked out **Cadillacs and Dinosaurs** or the new **Twilight: 2000**, I think you know what I mean. Even this issue's cover was one of those "let's see what we can get away with" experiments.

Another part of the job is coordinating the artists. While this can be one of those wish fulfillment situations of contacting Frank Frazetta (whose work graces the cover of **Challenge 43**), it can also mean calling artists and asking them to produce brilliant artwork virtually overnight. And they do.

In the case of this special swimsuit insert (to be referred to as the "Swimsert" from now on), I even got some illustrative contributions from the art staffs of FASA, Chaosium, and West End. Thanks again to all these great people—I had a blast doing it, and maybe we'll do it again next year.

Of course that's not all there is to the job, but that's about all I can go into now. Write and let me know what you thought of "Cowabunga! It's the Beach!"

Until next time, I'm outta here.

CHALLENGE

AUOREAN BIOCHEMISTRY

Aureore Sourcebook page 25 and **Kafer Dawn** page 12 (2300 AD products) both state that "Auroran animals are either actively poisonous to humans when eaten (causing anaphylactic reactions such as described for the bloodsucker) or they do absolutely nothing for them, passing through their systems undigested. This is because Auroran life is based on right hand, or dextro-amino acids, mirror image (and undigestible) forms of the levo-amino acids necessary for human life. For the same reason, humans eaten by Auroran life forms either do nothing for the predators—or make them very, very sick."

As far as I can see with my limited knowledge of biochemistry, provided that an Auroran life form is not poisonous to humans, it is not true that it would "do absolutely nothing for them, passing through their systems undigested."

Levo-amino acids are useless to create protein built on dextro-amino acid and vice versa—so far I agree with the text. On the other hand, carbohydrates, trace minerals, water, and perhaps even vitamins ought to be present in an Auroran life form.

I can see absolutely no reason why those should be undigestible or useless to humans. Thus, eating nothing but Auroran life forms would, in the long run, leave you with a severe shortage of protein, causing deficiency diseases. It would, however, be possible to use Auroran life forms (provided that they are nonpoisonous) as a supplement to normal food, especially if the normal food is rich in protein.

Is this reasoning correct?

Dag Stalhandske
Sweden

Loren Replies: Dag, you are 99% correct. Nonpoisonous Auroran life forms can supplement Terran food. The simpler the nutrient, the easier it is to absorb, as you point out, and life forms are more than just protein. Some of the more complicated carbohydrates are tougher to make use of, however. I would take issue with one point: Lacking a needed amino acid is not a deficiency disease; it is starvation.

MINIATURES

I would like to share with fellow **Space: 1889** players how I use the miniatures in **Sky Galleons of Mars**.

I have made my game three-dimensional by using a series of perspex height rods, which fit into one another. The base represents Very Low altitude, and as the

vessel ascends or descends, rods are added or removed. Each rod represents a height level and is two inches long (the same length as a game hex is side).

I assemble them by using perspex tubing with an interior diameter of three millimeters and rodding with an exterior diameter of three millimeters.

I cut them into two-inch sections and glue each rod one inch into the tube, so the final assembly has a one-inch rod projecting from one end and a one-inch tube at the other. Thus, they can fit together in any order.

The ships, after being painted and modified to make them look better, have a one-inch perspex rid fitted into their bottom, so they fit onto the height rods.

The plastic ships are quite stable, even at the highest level, but I have discovered that the metal miniatures are top heavy and, at high levels, fall over with vexing frequency! I am now experimenting with one-inch-high rids and/or larger/thicker/heavier bases.

The final result is visually very effective and also makes the game easier, with height differences, weapon angles, and line of sight easy to see.

I strongly suggest that **Sky Galleons** players adopt a similar scheme, and should also paint and customize their ships. This will provide for maximum visual impact, which is, after all, the main reason to use miniatures rather than pieces of cardboard on a flat surface.

G. J. Imisides
Australia

BROWNIE POINTS

Where have you been? What has happened to you? We have met before—way back in your young days (issue 25), when you were just a sole manufacturer's games magazine. All you did then was look at GDW—there was no room in your life for me and no life in your room for me.

But we were destined to meet again. A chance find in the Virgin Mega-Store in beautiful Birmingham—I discovered that you had blossomed into much more.

You now can never take your eyes off any science-fiction game, regardless of who makes it. You're just my type. And now you have changed my life—I have now taken a chance with games by GDW and have been pleasantly surprised. Thank you, **Challenge**.

Well, GDW, what can I say but "brilliant." A near-perfect magazine with the production qualities of an expert. Your articles are informative, interesting, useful, and game genre-

Letters from our Readers

crossable. Take a brownie point!

Why did I say near perfect? You see, I think you ought to do the following—drop all the articles, artwork, editorial, etc., and just have blank pages. Thus, we could scribble in whatever we wanted and have the perfect personalized magazine! Every issue would suit each individual, and thus your subscriber range would be maximized.

Seriously, no magazine can have everything everybody wants. To use the old adage, "You can please all of the people some of the time, and you can please some of the people all of the time." So stop printing all those letters from the moaning minies, and instead have an annual readers survey.

James Clay
United Kingdom

Thank you, James, for the glowing praise. We're happy with the direction **Challenge** is heading, but then again, we are a bit biased....

BALANCING SPACE HULK

I'm writing in response to "Balancing Space Hulk" in **Challenge 43**. I agreed with most of his points. However, the Marines would be hard pressed to lose Scenario 6.

One of our players has created a defense which makes it difficult for the Genestealers to win. He accomplishes this by positioning three Marines on the north wall of the room, with the center guy facing down the corridor and the other two adjacent to him. Two additional Marines stand next to the entrance to the room. These five will always be on overwatch. The flamers are positioned at the ends of the final T-intersection with the doors open. Their job is to spend four turns flaming the intersection, then to go out and commit the Genestealers to kill them. The sergeants are placed halfway between the final corridor and the intersections on overwatch. The final Marine is placed about three squares up the final corridor, and he is also on overwatch.

This defense has never lost. I can hear someone exclaiming that he can't fire out of the room due to special rules within the scenario. The flamer is the only weapon that cannot fire into or out of the room or the final corridor section. We recommend that the Marines be reduced to one squad for the scenario.

"Warhammer by the Numbers" in **Challenge 44** was also a nice article, but it didn't address everything. Sure, the Orks have a toughness of 4, which makes them harder

to kill. But with a small addition to the Marines in the form of toxin grenades and missiles and virus grenades, the Orks are dead and their toughness makes no difference. All the grenade/missiles have to do is hit. The Orks don't have sealed suits unless the referee allows them to have them.

I also disagree with the vehicles being too tough. Generally, if one is on the field it draws a lot of fire power to it to try to destroy it. Three tactical squads with crack missiles could destroy it from a reasonable distance away. Certain psionic powers could take it out without much problem and a vortex grenade would definitely take a vehicle out. Generally we have found that we would rather spend the points on troops than vehicles.

Mike Beavers
Watsonville, CA

Have any comments on this issue? How about gaming in general? Letters from our Readers provides gamers an opportunity to air their views. The opinions presented do not necessarily reflect those of the magazine. **Challenge** reserves the right to edit letters. Write to **Challenge Letters**, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.

TWIN ENGINE GAMING PRESENTS:

Out Time Days

a game of Time Travel in an alternate dimension

THE EXPERIENCE: OTD is a game of life on a strange world. Although populated by a variety of semi-humanoid races, it is nothing like the Earth that your character left behind. Gone is the industrial might of large nations. The multi-talented worker is a thing of the past. Even your famed Time Jumping skills have been checked to a certain degree. However, you do happen to be one of the few Time Jumpers on this world, and that in itself is a major strength.

You'll choose one of several sects to work with, or attempt to create your own from scratch, which will help set your general method of operation. As each new time opens, there are new discoveries to make, new lands to chart, and new people to meet. The world awaits change, and you are the catalyst.

OUT TIME DAYS is a highly interactive role-playing Play-By-Mail game with turns processed weekly. It has received excellent reviews, notably from Flagship and Paper Mayhem. Turn cost is \$5.00. The game is open ended and 99% computer moderated. The rulebook may be obtained for \$5.00 (refundable with startup). A special startup is available that gives you the rulebook, the startup turn, and five turns for only \$15.00.



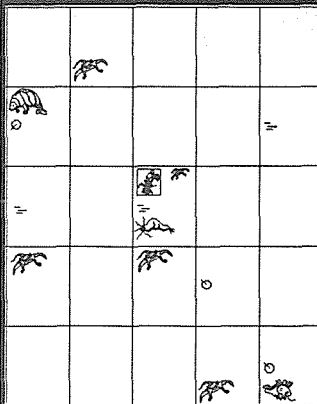
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Space Combat

a game of pure tactical combat...
in a rather unique environment

You'll be fighting in an edgeless contest zone aboard living creatures. **Space Combat** is almost all combat, with some room for diplomacy. Offensive actions include the creature's Psychic Screams to mentally disrupt others, launching Inverse Mines that will implode near your enemy, freeing Spores to destroy internals, using Nerve Pulses to paralyze pesky scouts, and Virally Infecting your opponent in the hopes of taking over their alien. Each turn comes with a special full-page graphic printout of your ending position to aid you in planning.



Space Combat was designed to be easy to learn, but difficult to master. Every game starts with ten players, and as each is eliminated, the chances of the game ending will increase. Turnsheets are custom made on a laser printer to aid you in filling out your next turn. The games run about 12-18 turns. Cost is \$3.50 per turn. A rulebook (required before you can join) is \$1.00 (free if you mention this ad!).

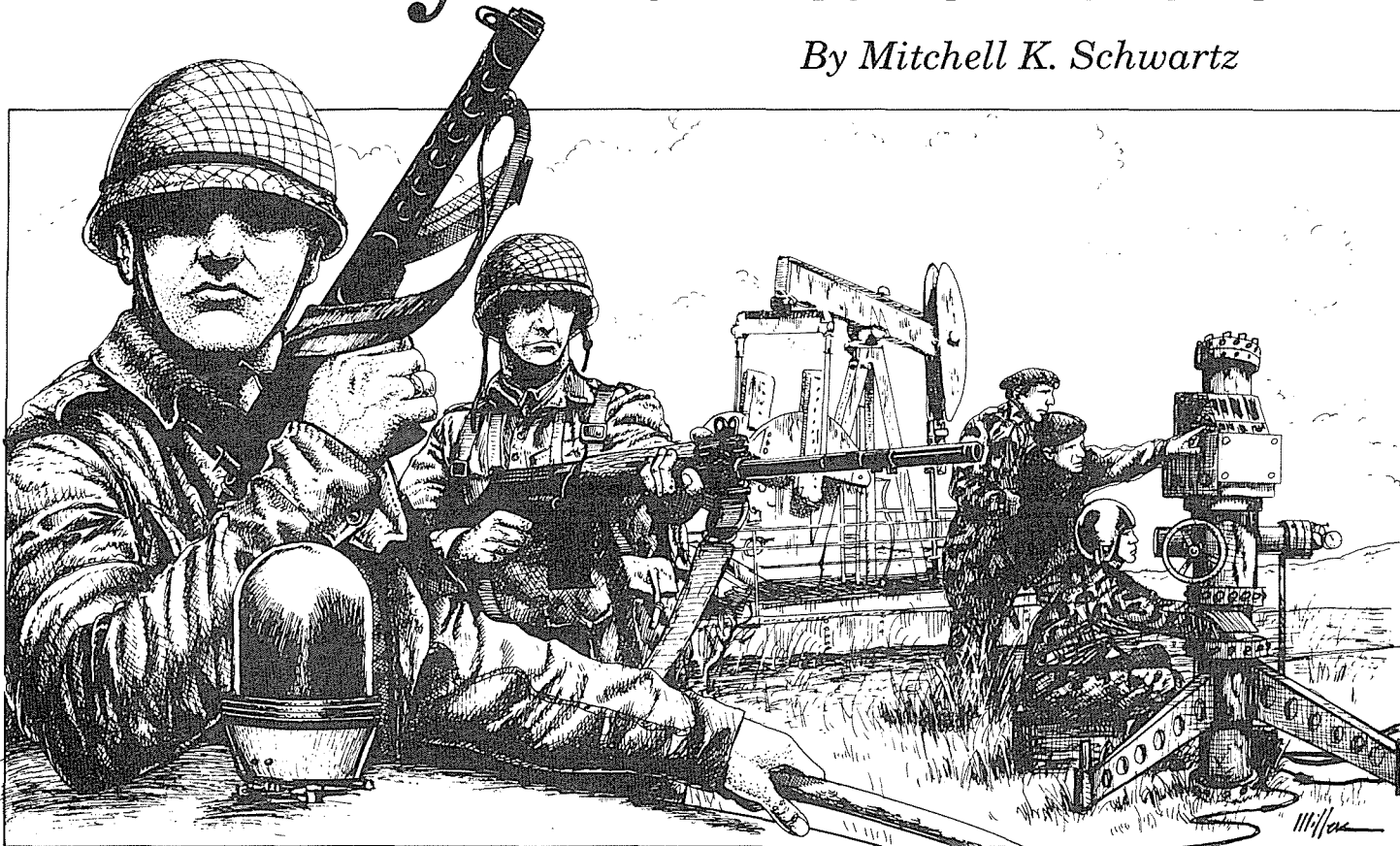


Twin Engine Gaming; Dept 209; 3254 Maple Leaf Ct.; San Jose, CA 95121

An adventure for 4-10 characters in northwestern Pennsylvania. Detached from the military in March 2001, the PCs are offered employment for a resource salvage project.

Pennsylvania Crude

By Mitchell K. Schwartz



Resource salvage is the get-rich-quick industry in the post-war era. In essence, resource salvage is the discovery and retrieval of raw materials or partially processed materials, like computer chips, copper wire, or unshaped plastic for industrial use. Many loads of such material have been abandoned or lost in the transportation pipeline since the 1997 nuclear strikes.

How Resource Salvage Works: In more normal times, industries bought the raw materials they needed from other companies that manufactured, refined, or mined them. Consider your television set—glass picture tube, electronics of silicon and copper wiring, plastic and metal fittings, wood cabinet perhaps. These are not all conjured up at the factory that assembles the television set.

During the war, the transportation network that connected the producers of different material collapsed. Many of these unfinished goods were ignored during

looting—a truckload of plastic blocks or of floppy disks is not of much value to your average looter. Factories not directly affected by attacks or riots soon ran out of the stock needed to manufacture finished goods, and the scale of production was cut back.

Resource salvage attempts to bridge the resource gaps by locating and supplying the required raw materials.

The resource salvage business works like this:

1. Individuals (salvage scouts) search through unsecured areas for items of value. (This can be an adventure by itself.) They return to a secure area and try to sell the location of what they have located to a local government or a fledgling manufacturer, called a sponsor.

2. The sponsor arranges the salvage trip, bringing together transport, security, guide, and the technical experts appropriate for the project. In some cases, the guide and the technical expert may go first to see if the discovered item is really worth procuring. Project teams are made of specialists to cover the different aspects

of the job—transport, guiding, technical aspects, and protection.

3. The project team locates and procures the item of interest and hauls it to the secure area.

4. The item is either sold at a contracted price or turned over to the project's sponsor. All the team members are then paid off.

What is Salvageable: Intact material may still be useful to the right people, though probably not to the player characters directly. However, lying about for three years or more does little to enhance the quality of material—finished or unfinished. Wood, paper, and cloth rots unless protected from the elements. Iron rusts. Glass can break if handled roughly.

Remember that much of this material was abandoned in trucks along highways, in trains left in abandoned train yards, and in warehouses left unattended. Many storage facilities have been broken into or burned, letting the weather in if nothing else. Some fraction of most finds will be damaged. The referee should use his judgment and

some thought about a building's recent past to determine how much of a resource is damaged and in what way.

Usable material should suit the area where it is found. One is not likely to find a truckload of preprogrammed computer chips abandoned on a roadside in the Zagreb Mountains of Iran nor several tons of cow fodder abandoned in an industrial warehouse in Brooklyn.

Referees should carefully choose what the salvage is and where it is located. If it is too easily found, then anyone can get it—and probably would have earlier. If the salvage is too useful an item, someone else is likely to have walked off with it already. Finally, if it is too low-priced an item, no one will consider it worth the risk of retrieving.

Risky Business: Like prospecting out West in the 19th century and most get-rich-quick schemes, resource salvage is not without its risks. Salvage scouts cover some rough territory and good finds are few and far between. Making a pickup can be worse than scouting, as the project team is usually a larger, slower, and more valuable target than the scout who originally found it.

Where to Use Resource Salvage: Resource salvage is a profitable industry anywhere in the world where a stable area borders an uncontrolled region that once held industry. To enable resource salvage to work, the region should also be stable enough to support a resurgent industry or two.

MACGIVERN'S OIL PROJECT

In the case of the resource salvage operation the PCs will be involved in, MacGivern purchased the option on the location of an old well that supposedly still has some easily acquired crude. Northwestern Pennsylvania is where the oil business started in the 1860s. The job is to sneak some 75 kilometers into Pennsylvania to the area near Titusville, locate the well the salvage scout found, and hold the area while the petroleum engineer and his crew open the wellhead and pump out 10 truckloads of crude oil.

The idea is to be quiet and to leave the area undisturbed so that later trips can be safely made. Bonuses can be paid for treaties or agreements with the major gangs in the area.

The Convoy: The convoy includes the following:

- 1 2½-ton truck carrying the drilling and pumping equipment, tools, and supplies (including 400 kilograms of domestic food).
- 1 1000-liter tank trailer of ethanol.
- 10 10,000-liter tank trucks (one loaded with ethanol).
- 1 ¾-ton pickup if MacGivern comes along (his own).

All vehicles start out full of ethanol. Note

that most of the ethanol being carried in the tankers will be needed to run the drilling and pumping equipment.

If the characters have their own vehicles, they can drive them. If not, there is space available in the other vehicles for the characters' supplies and equipment. The vehicles mentioned listed here must be returned at the end of the adventure. The tankers belong to Murray Trucking. The 2½-ton truck, the pump, and the drilling equipment must be returned to MacGivern.

One of the petroleum workers drives the 2½-ton truck. One of Murray's employees drives each of the tank trucks. If MacGivern goes along, he will want one of the PCs assigned as his driver.

The Terms: MacGivern offers the PCs their choice of the following terms:

● A straight 20% cut of the delivery payment. The contracted rate is \$2 per liter for delivered crude.

● \$10,000 cash (half in advance, half on delivery) and a 5% cut of the delivery payment. The advance money can be used to purchase equipment.

● \$15,000 in cash: \$5000 up front and \$10,000 for completion of the mission.

If the party is very under-equipped, MacGivern could loan money to the party against the returns from the project. Such a loan would be drawn up in a legal document, so that regional law enforcement authorities could be responsible for enforcing repayment. If they do not get enough payment from the project, the PCs would be obligated to further services to MacGivern—or be on the lam from the authorities, another oft-used adventure springboard.

When the PCs accept the job, MacGivern leaks word of it to the militia. The party is then contacted by a Capt. Winsloe, who identifies himself as attached to the militia intelligence staff. He will offer to pay the party for a military assessment of the area on its return. The acceptance is voluntary.

The Route: For mapping, use any Pennsylvania road map. Your local AAA office has them if you cannot find them elsewhere. The project convoy leaves from Jamestown, New York. MacGivern can find the players transport or fuel to Jamestown if needed.

The PCs have a choice of main routes:

● Jamestown to Sugargrove to Corry on PA 69, Corry to Spartansburg on PA 77, then south to Titusville on PA 89 (76.5 kilometers). Alternatively, the PCs can pass through Spartansburg to Riceville and take PA 8 south to Titusville (88 kilometers). Kincaid, the project team scout, tells you that this route is pretty quiet and barren, with no permanent gangs, but the roads are bad.

● Jamestown to Warren on US 62, Warren to Pittsfield on US 6, Pittsfield to Pleasantville on PA 27, and PA 36 into Titusville (103

TWILIGHT: 2000

kilometers). Though longer, this route offers better roads. Kincaid tells you that the Blackhawks of Warren can be bought off with alcohol fuel, medicine, ammunition, or perhaps food (winter supplies will be running low).

● West to the edge of New York state's influence and to Erie, and then travel down US 19, PA 97, and PA 8 (Erie to Waterford to Union City to Titusville) (95 kilometers). Kincaid says Erie is a trouble spot, but that the roads to Erie are good.

Road Quality: Roads in the area have not been serviced in over three years and are beginning to show weathering. Interstates 80 and 79 are still in reasonably good condition. The main roads in the area of the adventure are US 6, US 62, PA 8 and PA 27. All of these are two-lane highways still in reasonable states of repair.

There are numerous other smaller roads near small towns. The players can always choose more circuitous routes, though the roads may well be in worse shape.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The area is fairly quiet. Most of the excitement in western Pennsylvania is centered further south (see **Allegheny Uprising**). There are few marauder bands about and very few remaining farmers. However, neither group is friendly. The marauder bands will oppose anyone they see as a threat to their small spheres of power and victimize anyone else (though they may be bought off). The surviving farmers will see any group as just another marauder band, though trading fuel, medicine, or ammo may grant talk or a place to spend the night.

The descriptions under The Land discuss places where things are out of the ordinary. Otherwise, towns and villages are isolated, underpopulated, usually hungry and unfriendly. There hasn't been much authority, law, or order around here for nearly three years.

COURSE OF PLAY

Running the adventure is fairly straightforward. The PCs should choose one of the routes, form up their convoy, drive down into Pennsylvania, find the farm, pump the oil, and return. The encounters with marauders will fill this adventure out a bit. Remember, the idea is a peaceful mission—if MacGivern can't return safely, the mission is half a failure.

Referees who fear that their PCs are running too quickly through the adventure can cut the travel rate road speeds by as much as half due to poor road conditions. A few sample road problems can be played out by having the PCs negotiate a washout or a landslide.

If player characters have not already hit one, initiate a mandatory encounter within five kilometers of Warren, Oil City, Franklin, or Titusville if the PCs pass that close to any of the named towns. Warren and Oil City are occupied by gangs, and Franklin and Titusville are guarded by local militia.

Negotiation is usually the better way out of a confrontation in these towns. MacGivern will try to pay off either gang to secure passage if he must, but will put off trying to explain what the project team is doing. If forced, he will offer a 5% cut of the profits for passage. If MacGivern is not along, the PCs will have to decide how to handle this situation. If they can manage a treaty, MacGivern should pay them a bonus.

It is important to keep track of how many people are told about the purpose of this journey. This project will draw marauders like flies to jelly.

Where the Oil Is: MacGivern's site is on an abandoned farm, which is three miles east of PA 227 and south of PA 36. The original well had been drilled and capped before the turn of the century. Geologic action in the last 30 years plus the atom-inspired seismic shocks of 1997 and 1998 reopened the well a bit—enough to provide enough oil to pump.

The farm consists of a farmhouse, a small barn, two small sheds, the wreckage of another couple of sheds, a water well with a hand pump, and a cement-capped well-head (see the Farm Site Map). The pump works once its been primed (Kincaid knows—he primed it last November). The wellhead is cracked (that's how it Kincaid found it) and does not pose much of a problem to remove (Easy: Combat Engineer or Easy: Civil Engineer). Termant can supervise this half-hour task.) The buildings are surrounded mostly by open fields for a few hundred meters in any direction.

The farm has been abandoned for a couple of years. There are signs of a fire on the buildings (broken glass, bullet holes, a couple of dark stains on the floor) that happened a while ago, but no signs of more recent habitation. The farm has been picked over a couple of times and nothing useful has been left behind. (But, Scrounging skill could find something useful like a cache of ammo or tools or a little canned food.)

Continue normal encounter checks while the group is at the farm (once a day as the team is halted). However, increase the frequency of curious other groups once an armed encounter has occurred. Note that

the food the party has will not last long, so hunting and foraging will be required.

Farmhouse: The farmhouse has two stories and a partially finished basement (see the Farmhouse Map):

1. The office now contains some chopped wood furniture and a few empty shelves.

2. The dining room is empty.

3. The kitchen is empty except for its built-in cabinets. Someone dropped an explosive in the refrigerator at one point. The tap does not work. The kitchen includes a door with steps leading down to the basement. Someone has torn out some plumbing in the wall to the dining room.

4. The living room is empty except for a smashed picture frame and a small sofa with slashed cushions and removed stuffing. There are dark stains on the floor.

5. All the bedrooms are empty, except for box springs. The middle bedroom also contains a slashed mattress. The large bedroom has a small balcony on the front of the house.

6. The bathroom fixtures do not function. There are dark stains in the bathtub.

7. The basement includes an oil furnace that had a fire in it at one point, a non-functional water pump and heater, and a storm/fallout shelter. The shelter is empty except for some shelves and wooden benches. The storm door is intact.

8. The back porch has half a room (half the porch and some of the surrounding area is covered with rubble), with a short set of stairs leading to the ground.

PUMPING CRUDE

There are four phases to pumping the oil:

1. Termant sets up his equipment.

2. Drill until oil is struck.

3. Pump the crude into the trucks.

4. Cap the well and strike the pump equipment.

Set Up: It will take Termant and his team eight hours to set up their equipment. Add two hours for each assistant who was incapacitated before this point. Subtract one hour for each additional character who helps (up to a maximum of three). Setting up counts as heavy work for determining fatigue and can only be accomplished during daylight hours.

Drill: Once set up, make a Difficult roll once every watch against Termant's Civilian Engineer skill to strike oil.

Pump: Once oil is struck, it is pumped out at about 1000 liters per hour. Check against Termant's Civil Engineer skill once a watch (Average). Failed rolls mean some kind of problem. Problems will cause an hour's delay and require an Average: Civil Engineer roll to fix. If Termant fails to fix a problem after three consecutive hours, Termant declares the well dry. No further attempts will

succeed at this well. Pumping oil is easy work for fatigue purposes. Pumping can continue 24 hours a day.

Strike the Equipment: Once finished, Termant and crew will take four hours to pack their equipment. Packing the drilling equipment counts as heavy work for fatigue purposes and can only be done during daylight hours.

The crude can be turned into diesel by allowing it to sit for some five days and settle. One 55-gallon (205-liter) barrel yields 80 liters of diesel fuel with a fuel energy rating of 1.5 (normal gasoline or diesel is rated 1, ethanol is rated 3).

RETURN

With any luck, the team should be ready to leave with full tank trucks in less than a week. If the team has been scrupulously quiet about what it is doing, use only the normal encounter charts. "Scrupulously quiet" means that no one outside of the team (and perhaps the Razz or the Blackhawks if they have been bought off) knows that the team is carrying crude oil.

If word has leaked out, the team will be quite popular. Marauders will not hear the *crude* part—just *oil*. Many small marauder groups will try to grab some oil. For that matter, so will most anyone—including the Titusville militia, though it is willing to charge it as a "toll." If the PCs were not able to keep that they are carrying crude secure, double the number of encounter rolls. On the "extra" rolls, skip those rolls that are not armed. This situation continues until the convoy crosses the New York border.

Payoff: Depending on which offer the PCs chose in The Terms (above), the PCs are paid in western New York notes (called Buffalo hides or Winnies), which can be traded for a domestic food and alcohol fuel or used as a medium of exchange in western New York.

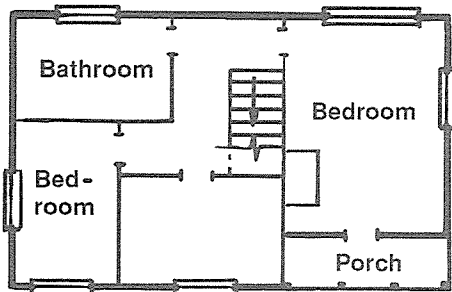
If the team brought back more than 40,000 liters of crude (four trucks), one month after the team delivers the crude a small amount of gasoline will appear on the domestic market—one-quarter (25%) of the amount of crude the PCs brought out with them. Double the normal price of gasoline to \$16 per liter.

However, for those using **Howling Wilderness**, that means waiting in Buffalo as the spring drought of 2001 wears on...

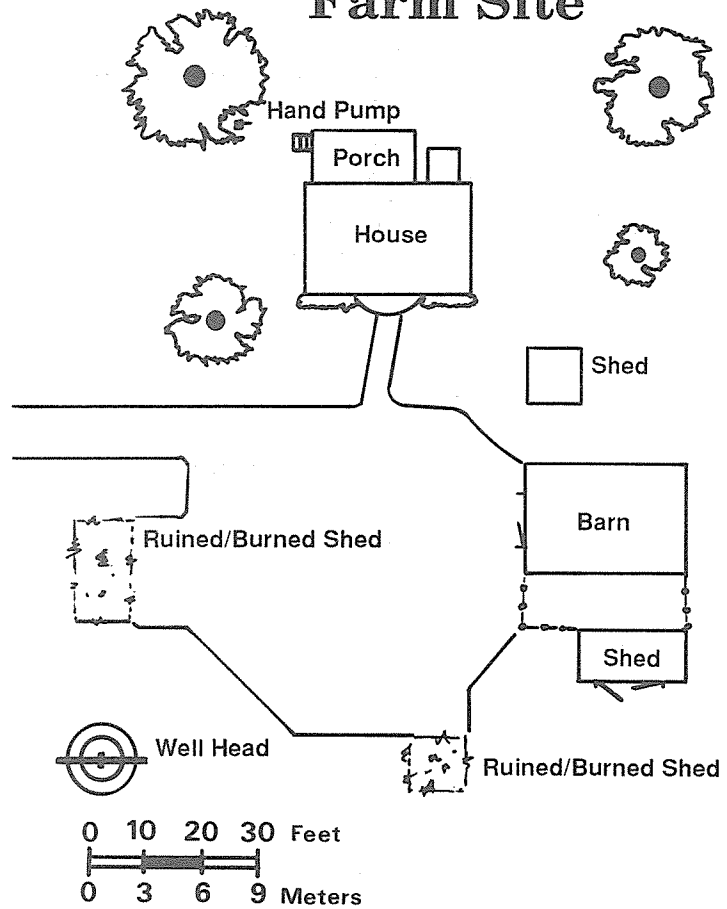
Other Endings: If the party cannot complete the contract but it returns to western New York, it must return any equipment borrowed from MacGivern and repay any loans. If the team is due any payment from the mission, survivors will be paid.

If the PCs return without the rest of the team, there will be an investigation, but unless there is proof of foul play by the player characters, nothing will happen to

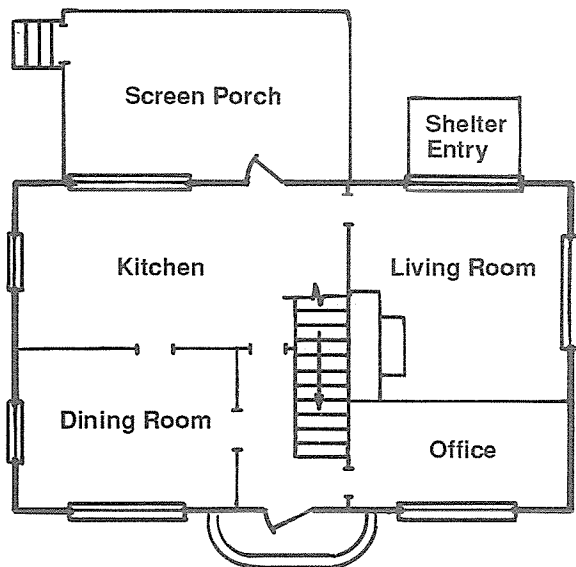
Upper Floor



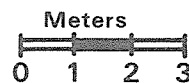
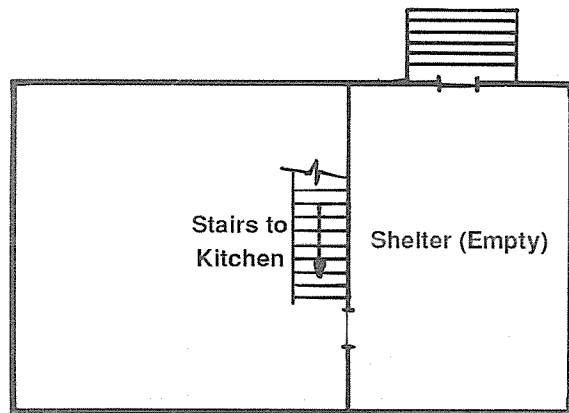
Farm Site



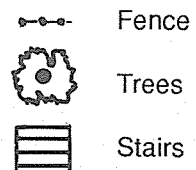
Ground Floor



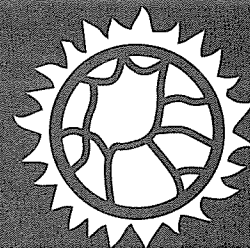
Basement/ Shelter



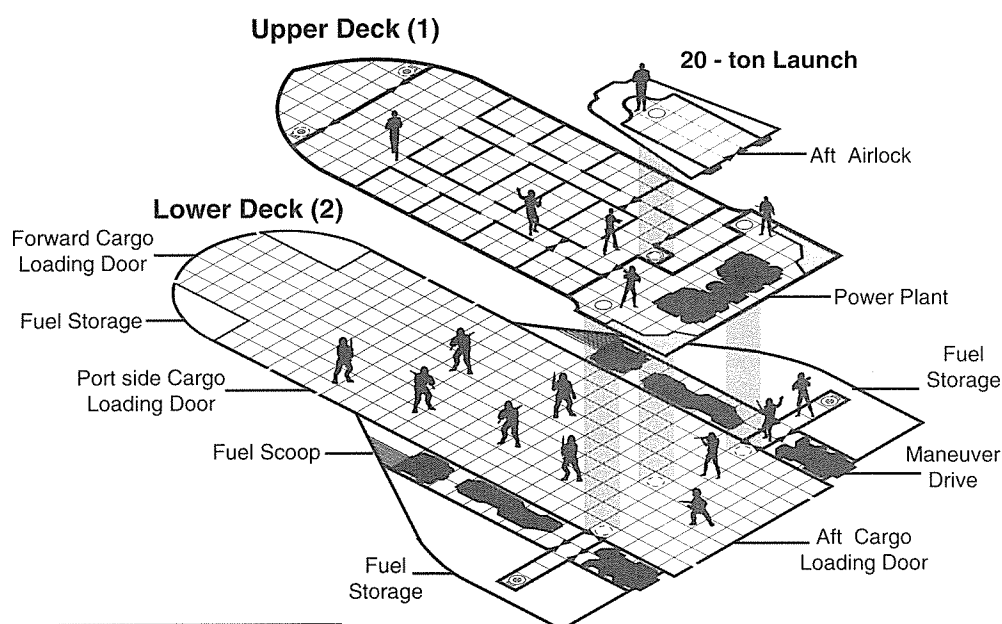
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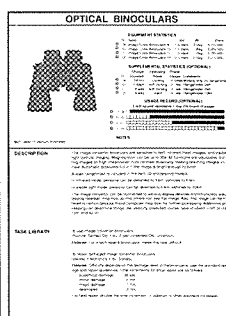
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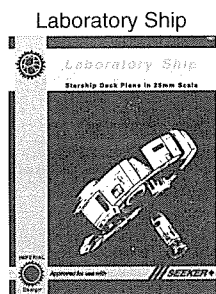


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in the
Gateway Sector . . .*

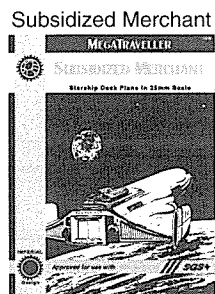
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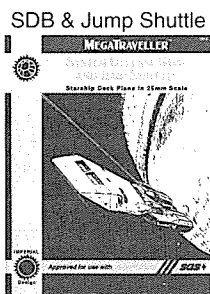
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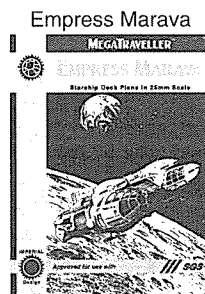


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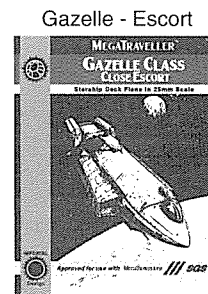


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them. However, investigations take time—and the PCs will be requested to remain during the investigation.

If the party members choose to run off with a truck or two of crude, the rest of the project team can do little to stop them. Murray and his drivers will try to stop them from leaving (they're stealing his trucks!) until one of their number is killed or incapacitated. Hijacked truck drivers will attempt to escape from the party. The PCs will be considered criminals in western New York.

ENCOUNTERS

Use the standard **Twilight: 2000** encounter charts with the following exceptions:

- Armed encounters within 20 kilometers of Warren will be members of the Blackhawks mounted on motorcycles.

- Armed encounters within 30 kilometers of Warren will be members of the Blackhawks mounted on motorcycles on a 1-4 rolled on 1D6.

- Armed encounters within 10 kilometers of Oil City will be members of the Razz.

- Armed encounters within 30 kilometers of Oil City will be members of the Razz on a 1-4 rolled on 1D6.

- Armed encounters within 10 kilometers of Titusville will be members of the Titusville militia on a 1-3 rolled on 1D6.

- Armed encounters within 10 kilometers of Franklin will be members of the Venango County militia on a 1-3 rolled on 1D6.

- For all other armed encounters, roll 1D6: 1: 1-3 marauders with vehicles. 2: 1-3 mounted marauders with wagon. 3: 1-3 marauders on foot. 4: 1-3 marauders on foot. 5: 1D3 salvage scouts. 6: A platoon from the 228th Infantry (see Organizations).

All marauders which do not fall within these radii are small unaffiliated bands.

Number of Marauders: For the number of marauders roll 1D6 to determine the number of dice to roll: A 1-2 means roll 1D6 for the number of marauders; 3-4 means roll 2D6; 5-6 means roll 3D6.

Marauders With Vehicles: These marauders will have one civilian vehicle for each 1D6 of marauders. Suggested vehicles are 4x4s, pickup trucks, or 2½-ton trucks.

Mounted Marauders: Mounted marauders will have one wagon with two or three men on it and horses for all other marauders.

Salvage Scouts: This type of encounter will seek to avoid fights, but will be happy to exchange information about gangs and natural hazards once the party proves itself friendly. There is a chance salvage scouts will know Kincaid or that they will try to follow the party to see what it is up to (the tank trucks are hard to hide). The group will consist of one Veteran NPC and two Experienced NPCs who are armed with civilian arms.

EQUIPMENT AVAILABILITY IN WESTERN NEW YORK

Military equipment is scarce in western New York. All non-small arms weaponry, such as machineguns, grenade launchers and mortars are routinely confiscated by the militia. Needless to say, military vehicles are not available for sale either. The militia has too few and will not sell them. Any available vehicles, including the ones mentioned in the Convoy section (above), are civilian. Jeeps and civilian 4x4s similar to the UAZ-469 are available.

Assault rifles are available, but expensive (triple book price). Machineguns and grenades may be available on the black market at even steeper rates and are dangerous to acquire. Trafficking in these items is illegal according to the law as enforced by the state government. Treat any items in this category as R/R.

Sport rifles, shotguns, and pistols of US or Canadian manufacture are available per their listings in **Twilight: 2000** or its supplements. South American equipment is rare. European items are unavailable as a general rule.

New Equipment

Pump, Medium-Sized, Heavy-duty: This heavy-duty industrial pump is used for pumping liquids of various viscosities. It will pump crude oil at about 1000 liters an hour. The pump runs off its own generator, which was designed to run off diesel. Included with it are 50 meters of flexible tubing and a variety of couplers. The pump will remain mounted on the 2½-ton truck.

Price: \$4000 (S/S) Fuel Cap: 60L Fuel Cons: 60L/watch Fuel Type: D, A, G Wt: 450 kg Maint: 2

Drilling Equipment: This ground drill system includes the drill, bits for use in the earth, a few hundred feet of piping, and connections suitable for hooking up to the drill. The drill includes its own internal generator, which was originally designed to run off diesel. The drill will remain mounted on the 2½-ton truck.

Price: \$8000 (R/R) Fuel Cap: 60L Fuel Cons: 60L/watch Fuel Type: D, A, G Wt: 1200 kg Maint: 6

THE LAND Northwestern Pennsylvania

Northwestern Pennsylvania was not densely populated before the war. Small mill towns or farming communities dot the hills and forests. The oil boom first struck here, but left as the wells dried up and easier drill sites were found in Texas, Oklahoma, Indiana, and California.

The Allegheny Mountains run through here (the northern part of the north-south ridges described in **Allegheny Uprising**). Travel off the roads should be considered in

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mountains unless within 60 kilometers of Lake Erie. Much of the area is also wooded. Fortunately for the local inhabitants, there are no worthy nuclear targets nearby, so the area has not suffered too much from nuclear effects.

Erie County

North of Crawford County, Erie County is the extreme northwest corner of the state.

Erie: Once a booming port at the western end of the Erie Canal and the eastern end of the Great Lakes, Erie suffered decline through much of the 20th century as lake traffic fell off.

After the Thanksgiving Day attacks, Erie found itself as a last stop for refugees from points west and south trying to enter New York. The population swelled beyond anything the local authorities could cope with. By the spring of 1998, no authority in Erie had any control and services broke down. There were riots over food and shelter—but there was none to be had.

Gangs arose to seize by force what authority no longer offered—and fought. Gang warfare, rioting, and bandit raids have decreased the population from nearly three million in March 1998 to less than 50,000 in March 2000. Many died, some fled south, and some fled across the lake to Canada. The death rate from starvation, disease, and violence is still high.

Many people live in hovels and shantytowns, the shells of warehouses and factories. Few people live alone (for safety). Gang warfare continues. All strangers are attacked for any food, medicine, and weapons by any number of gangs numbering between five and 100 people. There are rumors of cannibal gangs attacking others for food.

Although I-79 passes by the eastern outskirts of the city only, some gangs stay in that area hoping for pickings off the highway. In fact, they sometimes fight each other for the right to block the road.

Warren County

East of Erie and Crawford counties, this is one of the least developed areas of Pennsylvania. Most of the county is rooted in the Allegheny Mountains.

Warren Area (Includes Russell, North Warren, and Youngsville): This area is under the control of the Blackhawks. The

Blackhawks were not the first marauders in the area, but they have stayed in the area since late 1999. They "tax" the local residents a share of produce for their protection, which is spotty at best.

The Blackhawks actively patrol as far north as Russell and as far west as Youngsville; surveillance is sporadic past those towns. The area is sparsely populated, with about 30 families in each village and 100 families in Warren itself. There are as many families living outside each village on small farms as in it.

Locals who are not marauders and live outside the villages will be cautious until the PCs offer something in trade, especially fuel, medicine, or ammunition (all confiscated by the Blackhawks as part of taxes).

Rogertown: Rogertown is deserted. In October 2000, the locals refused to pay tribute and fought the Blackhawks. The town was destroyed by fire, and the surviving townsfolk left. The Blackhawks maintain a watch station at the west end of town, guarding the bridge.

Corry (Includes Columbus and Spring Creek): Corry was hit by marauders in May 2000. During the raid, the local militia, which had been reasonably successful at holding

out, was caught out in the open while constructing earthworks. They fought while their ammo lasted, but were cut off. The marauders ran rampant through town. Ten families (some 30 people) still live here, but keep out of sight. If the party stops or camps here, small items or small amounts of food may end up missing from camp.

Spring Creek and Columbus have similar stories and are mostly empty. They have about 20 shy inhabitants each.

Sugargrove: Sugargrove is a deserted village just on the Pennsylvania side of the border that has seen action between marauders and New York militia. The town is often occupied by a squad of New York militia (they are there on a 1-4 on 1D6), who can assist the project team at need, but will not leave the town.

Pittsfield to Pleasantville: The main road (PA 27) appears deserted. Anyone living on the road has been killed or chased off in that last three years. On the other hand, there is not enough here to make this area worth holding or staying in. The valley sides are rather steep. There are occasional deserted houses along the road. Most show signs of arson, gunfire, or looting.

PCs can meet some refugees living in the

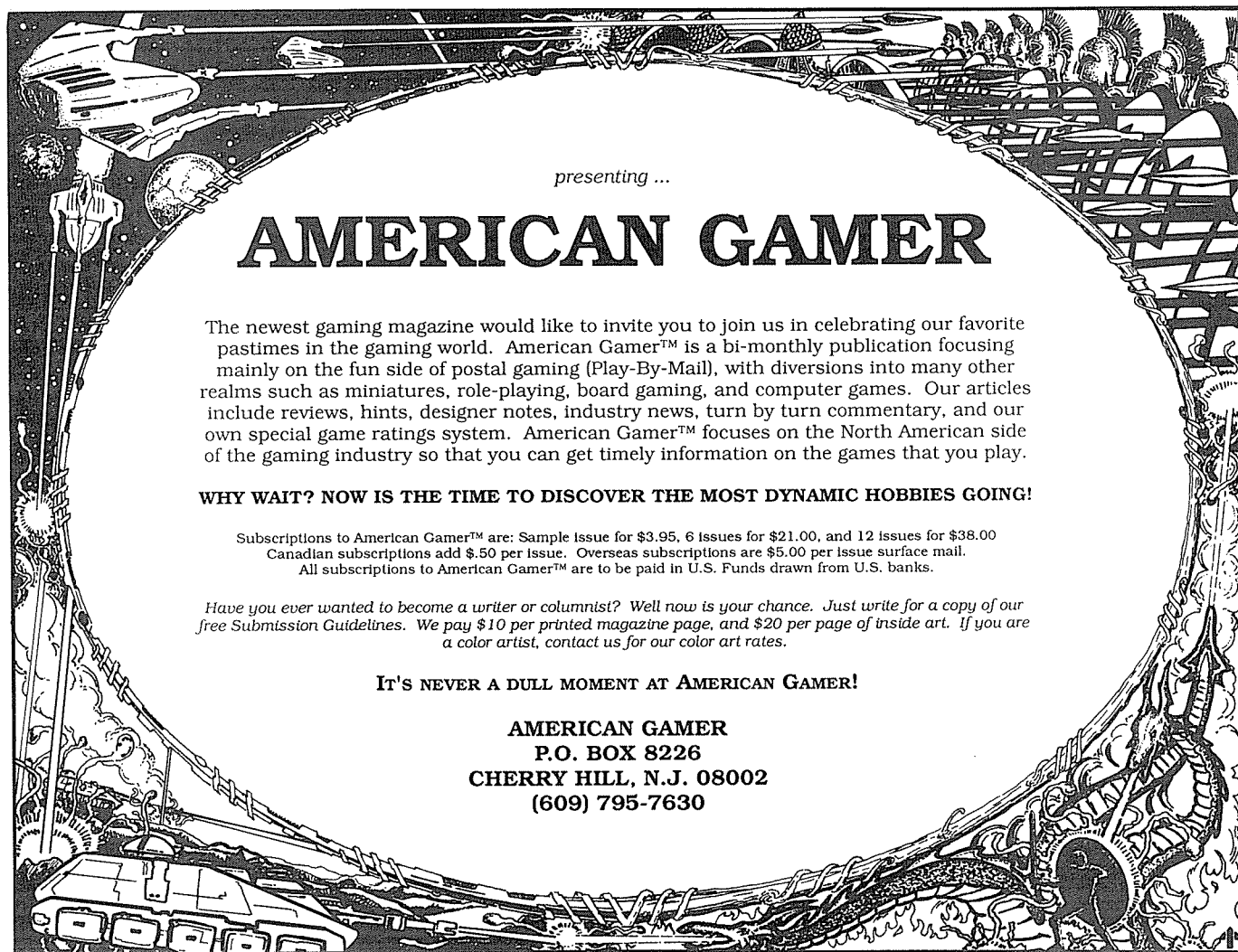
woods on the fringe of the valley (well off the road to avoid meeting anyone). The refugees will beg for anything and be happy to exchange information with the PCs. They know nothing of value.

Allegheny National Forest: A large national forest preserve between the south bank of the Allegheny River, the New York state border, and US 219, the forest is rough territory, little settled before the war. The few towns along its few roads have been mostly emptied by marauders, but there is little to keep the marauders here, either. A few villages of very tough local farmers have successfully banded together for defense here.

Crawford County

Located north and east of Venango County, Crawford's county seat and largest town, Meadville, is a major road hub where I-79, US 6, 19, and 322, and PA 27 meet. The eastern half of the county is rough and wooded.

Meadville: Meadville was reduced to a ruin during food riots in the spring of 1998 after its population, swollen by refugees, ran out of food following a period of reduced



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rations. Afterward, it was raided by a number of marauder and scavenger bands, which reduced its ability to defend itself.

Its current population is less than 200, most of whom hide from each other as well as any outsiders. There is very little of value in Meadville.

Titusville: Titusville is the northern end of the oil area. Titusville was a sleepy town of about 10,000 people when the war began. By the spring of 1998, it was flooded with refugees heading for New York state. Most of them were gone by the following spring, chased off by hunger or bandits, although some 2000 remain in small camps along Oil Creek in the state park south of town. Some refugees march into town for work, accepting small amounts of food as pay.

Titusville is just far enough from the Razz and the Blackhawks not to be bothered by them, though there are enough wandering smaller bands to keep the militia busy. The current population is about 500, with another 500 on small farms within 10 kilometers. The center of town is occupied, with many of the streets blocked off with rubble. There are ruined buildings all around the outside of town.

The resident militia charges a toll to pass through town on PA 8 or PA 27. There are usually 50 militia members on duty at any given time.

Hydetown: The Titusville militia maintains a small outpost that observes traffic on PA 8. They are a bit at odds with the few residents who have refused to relocate to Titusville, and the militia will not come out to defend them.

Venango County

Venango County is north of Butler County and east of Mercer county. Much of the county contains steep, rolling hills, with farms in the valleys and woods on the slopes.

Oil City: Oil City was built during the first oil rushes of the 1870s. It had been a depressed area during the 1970s and 1980s, and things were just beginning to look up again before the war. After waves of refugees flooded through the town, some staying, others driving out the original residents, the population stabilized at about 2000. Then came the marauders—the Razz. Death and those who fled dropped the population to its current 550. Oil City now has many empty buildings falling into ruin.

The locals are not happy about the Razz, who rule with a distinctly heavy hand. However, the locals are disorganized, demoralized, and mostly unarmed after the Razz beat the town militia in a series of skirmishes and battles in the late spring of 2000.

The Razz are based in Oil City in the

police station and an adjoining building. They keep a tight rein on the city and the surrounding area, though they do not range as far from Oil City as the Blackhawks do further north. They run regular patrols mounted in pickup trucks, jeeps, and 4x4s.

The Razz's leaders became aware of the potential oil in the area when they caught two would-be salvagers who wandered in to check for existing wells. The Razz do not know of any working wells in the area. Mark Fortin (Civil Engineer: 2) and Conrad Barmann (Civil Engineer: 1) came from Ohio searching for a working well in the late summer of 2000 when they were caught. Both are interested in escape and help work an oil rig for anyone who helps.

Strangers who appear to oppose the Razz will get help from the local population, but will draw opposition from the Razz.

Rouseville and Reno: These two villages north and west of Oil City, respectively, are nearly empty except for Razz outposts. Razz and Franklin militia have clashed in Reno.

Movement through here will be reported to Oil City, prompting a strong Razz patrol.

Franklin: Franklin is the Venango county seat, but has lost control of anything a dozen kilometers beyond town. Its population first swelled with refugees then shrank as people left looking for safer places. Its current population is about 800, with another 400 living on a couple dozen farms within 10 kilometers.

Its militia, developed from the county sheriff's office, numbers about 90. The militia is armed with a variety of sport weapons and two M16A2s. The "county" militia has fought a number of skirmishes with the Razz over the winter and has held them off, but needs to keep part of its strength guarding the town from other directions. The county militia sometimes ventures out to protect outlying farms.

Sugarcreek: This town was successfully defended from the Razz by the county militia. However, the victory was useless, as the Razz succeeded in starting several fires, thus gutting the town. The survivors retreated to Franklin.

Oil Creek: Oil Creek State Park stretches for some 15 kilometers along the banks of Oil Creek between Titusville and Oil City. This is a wild, wooded area. In the spring and summer of 1998, some 10,000 refugees entered the park in camps. By the early spring of 2001, only 2000 have survived the cold winters, bandits, lack of supplies, and lack of hope. As the drought picks up, their situation will worsen.

The refugee camps, which number between 50 and 500 in population, suffer raids by bandits. The southern camps are sometimes raided by the Razz. The northern camps are better off. Some refugees are

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able to get work in Titusville. This will end as food supplies get tighter.

Pleasantville: The Titusville militia maintains a small outpost that observes the crossroads in the center of town where PA 27, PA 36, and PA 227 meet. The outpost's mission is to merely report on traffic to Titusville.

Southwestern Pennsylvania

See GDW's **Allegheny Uprising** for information regarding points south of this adventure. If you have played **Allegheny Uprising** and its results affected this part of Pennsylvania, please take those results into account when playing "Pennsylvania Crude."

Western New York

Even with the fall of New York City and the collapse of Military Region I, the western counties of New York state have managed to maintain some semblance of order since 1998. Lieutenant Governor Julia Annesetto took personal charge of the area while the governor tried to handle the eastern region of the state.

Militia forces from Niagara Falls occupied and partially repaired the hydroelectric plant, providing the area with a trickle of semi-reliable power. The remnants of industries in Utica and Syracuse provided some material goods. The fields of western New York produced enough food to support the reduced population.

The year 2000 saw a decline in the region's fortune as more refugees sought entrance and then needed to be turned away. Western New York was forced to share the hydroelectric plant with the new Canadian government, reducing the power available. Due to further pressures on the militia from marauders and from the New America enclave in the north, more militia needed to be armed, stricter measures enforced, and less ground held. Annesetto stopped sending messages, goods, or food to her boss the governor, who was not faring as well. She declared her capital to be Buffalo.

Clearly, the region's problems will escalate the trouble in 2001, even without the drought of 2001. Still, if Annesetto can manage to control to a small enough area around Buffalo to defend, yet large enough to grow food on, her government may survive the year.

WEATHER

Even before the drought, March weather in mountainous northwestern Pennsylvania was rather bleak. Winter hangs around here until late in the month, often including a last storm or two, followed by wretched endless cold rain and chilly damp wind. If you are using **Howling Wilderness**, the winter of 2001 has been colder than usual, but once away from the Great Lakes, it's been almost snowless. This change becomes more evident the further the party moves away from Buffalo. The landscape is brown and gray, dusty where the mud isn't frozen.

Those using weather almanacs to simulate the weather—consider the average temperature seven degrees lower than usual, and the chance of precipitation quartered for the first two weeks and reduced to one-sixth of normal by the last week in March.

Those using the weather rules described in **Challenge 26** can consider the weather to have totaled 1560 Ddays; 1960 Ddays if using **Howling Wilderness**.

ORGANIZATIONS

Blackhawks: The nucleus of this group was the Blackhawk Bike Club of Butler, a rough crew to start with. The Bike Club drifted out of Butler before the winter of 1999 as the pickings became sparse. It has been based in Warren ever since, reinforced by the worst of the drifting human trash that brushes along the New York border.

The Blackhawks' control has not been permanently disputed for 50 kilometers around Warren, which they patrol daily on the motorcycles they still have running. They do not put up with "poachers," such as other marauder groups, even those just passing through.

They are not too cruel to their "subjects" unless they feel they have been cheated by a village or farm and need to make an example. McLeod, their leader, is smart enough to know that his boys can eat for years by not squeezing the life out of the locals.

There are 70 or so Blackhawks. Their leaders are Grunge McLeod, Willy Burns, and Blackjack Hawkins. They are equipped with 20 motorcycles, 10 cars and light trucks,

two 2½-ton trucks, 15 M-16A2s, two crossbows, and a variety of shotguns, sporting rifles, pistols, and melee weapons.

Razz: The Razz was originally called the Razzmatazz, but that took too long to say. The Razz formed from Ohio refugees near Cincinnati. They wandered east to Pittsburgh, then north to Erie. They were pushed out in some sharp turf battles, and after some losses they kept wandering east to Titusville in the spring and summer of 2000. They spent the fall and winter there.

It appears that some other folks remembered that western Pennsylvania used to produce oil, too. The Razz caught a few men sneaking on their turf a few clicks south of Titusville who were looking for oil. These would-be Rockefellers are now working for the Razz. However, they have almost no equipment, so progress has been slight. The Razz has some amount of crude, but no way to refine it other than to let it sit and become diesel. The Razz is likely to be willing to make a treaty if suitable terms are offered, like gasoline in return for crude.

The Razz has some 60 members, 12 M16A2s, an M203 (and a dozen HE 40mm grenades), and a large assortment of shotguns, sporting rifles, pistols, and melee weapons. The gang members also have three 2½-ton trucks and a number of smaller vehicles including jeeps, ¾- and 5/4-ton pickups, and civilian vehicles.

Gangs in Erie: Erie is the home of several gangs ranging in size from small (five to 30 members) to large (100 to 150) members. Most of these gangs are armed with only melee weapons, though some have firearms and a little ammo. The gangs will attack anyone travelling through town they think they can stop.

Platoon from 228th Brigade: A platoon from the 228th Infantry Brigade (Civgov) is moving through the area attempting to reach the Civgov enclaves at the other end of the great lakes. While not looking for trouble, it is fairly well-equipped to hand it back. The platoon will not attack the party, though it will be very interested in what the PCs are doing with 10 tank trucks and where the tank trucks

are going (the eternal quest for oil).

The platoon is led by 2nd Lieutenant Walter Eisner who has spent the war in the US. His orders are to map a route to the Civgov enclaves in the Midwest. Though not terribly experienced, Eisner is fairly intelligent. Staff Sergeant Alan McNulty is Eisner's platoon sergeant. He has the experience to match Eisner's brains. Both are apolitical, but loyal to their unit.

The platoon is travelling in a convoy of a LAV-25, three HMMVVs, and a 2½-ton truck carrying a medium still. The platoon has some 20 men, three of whom are wounded, (one seriously), 15 M16A2s (three with M203s), two M249 SAWs, four M231s, five .45 automatic pistols, ammo, domestic food, fuel, and radios.

Western New York: Western New York is an organized government formed when the Lieutenant Governor Julia Annesetto realized that the western half of the state might survive if it did not try to support the eastern half. The local county militias, along with state police units and the Fort Drum military staff, formed a more-or-less unified command, although they are too few in number to watch the borders and provide internal security.

The leaders are Julia Annesetto, who now claims the title Governor/Mayor of Buffalo, Thomas Doherty, and Major General David Dellvechio, head of the combined militias. There is almost no reason for the PCs to meet these leaders.

PROJECT TEAM NPCS

Thomas MacGivern: MacGivern is one of those men who rise from the ashes. Once a manager of an all-night convenience store, he has learned how to find needed resources. MacGivern is good at dealing with strangers.

MacGivern is 37. He carries a 9mm Parabellum automatic pistol and an M16A2, and wears a Kevlar flak vest. He will bring along his own 4x4. He is has Small Arms (Pistol): 6, and is an Experienced NPC.

Diamond 8: MacGivern is greedy (that's why he's in this business), but not blindly so. He will abort the mission in the face of extreme damage to the convoy trucks (if he cannot carry enough oil back, he won't make enough money on this trip to support the costs of the expedition).

Spade 7: MacGivern likes the feeling of being in charge. If the PCs do not include an ex-officer, MacGivern will accompany the team as its leader. If there is an officer to take command, he will go on a roll of 1-3 on 1D6. If he goes on the expedition, he will expect to make all the nonmilitary decisions.

Jeffrey Kincaid: Kincaid is the salvage scout who originally discovered the well. He is able to survive by himself in the dangerous areas south of New York. His Observation, Foraging, Small

Northwestern Pennsylvania Climate

D6	If Clear	If Partly Cloudy	If Cloudy	If Rain/Snow*
1	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear
2	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear
3	Clear	Clear	Clear	Clear
4	Clear	Clear	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy
5	Clear	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy
6	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy
7	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy	Cloudy
8	Partly cloudy	Cloudy	Cloudy	Cloudy
9	Cloudy	Cloudy	Cloudy	Cloudy
10	Cloudy	Rain	Rain	Rain

*Almost all rain or snow will be light.

Arms (Rifle), and Scrounging skills are high.

Kincaid is age 44 and a Veteran NPC. He is armed with a .30-30, a pump-action shotgun, and a knife and wears a Kevlar flak vest.

Diamond King: Kincaid has worked with MacGivern before but is nervous about this trip. This could be his most worthwhile find. He will not reveal any information about the location to anyone to make sure he gets his share.

Kincaid knows of the Blackhawks and the Razz and of the region the scenario occurs. He was through it earlier in winter. If the action gets very hot and things look bad for the party, he will desert the party and return to western New York alone. He knows how to hide himself.

Club 5: Kincaid also knows how to take care of himself and is not afraid to fight if he must.

Bruce Termant: Termant is the project team's petroleum engineer. Termant had worked for Shell Oil in New Jersey before the war. He was visiting relatives in Albany, New York for Thanksgiving 1997, and so survived the attack. There has not been much call for his services since the attack, and he had been a laborer in Utica until recently. MacGivern ran across him during another project in Utica, and contacted him when this project came up.

He has Civil Engineer: 6. For other skills, count him as a Novice NPC. Termant is 32 years old and is armed with a 9mm Parabellum automatic pistol.

Heart 4: Termant cares for his work crew and will not allow them to be sacrificed. He also tries to stay in the good graces of the party as he needs them to protect him and his crew.

Diamond Jack: Termant is no warrior. Indeed, he'd probably only fight if cornered by those he knew for certain would kill him. He was told by MacGivern that he will be well protected (by the party).

Four Petroleum Workers: These workers are Novice NPCs. They, their equipment, tools, gear, and the project team's food fill the 2½-ton truck. The workers have two shotguns between them, and they each have a knife.

Wayne Murray: Murray is the project team's hauler. Murray ran a small local trucking company in Utica before the war. He continued his business and expanded it to do some refurbishing work on trucks after the war began. He is 47 years old and an Experienced NPC. He is armed with a .38 revolver and a .30-30 lever-action rifle. He rides in the lead truck.

Diamond 4: Expanding into tank trucks has not proved to be as profitable an investment as Murray had hoped. He wants this project to succeed as a big score. These 10 tank trucks represent his entire tanker fleet.

Heart 7: Murray values his drivers, as most have been with him since before the war. Two are even his sons. Murray will not easily leave any of his drivers behind. Murray has Wheeled Vehicle: 7 and Mechanic: 8. Consider him an Experienced NPC for the rest of his skills.

Ten Drivers: These drivers, who range in age from 16 to 45, are Experienced (six of them) and Novice (the remaining four) NPCs. The Experienced drivers have Wheeled Vehicle: 6 and Mechanic: 5. The Novice drivers have Wheeled Vehicle: 5 and Mechanic: 3. The youngest driver and another (one of the Experienced ones) are Murray's sons. Each driver is armed with a handgun, a shotgun, or an inexpensive sporting rifle and about 20 shots of ammo.

ADVERSARIAL NPCS

Grunge McLeod: At age 29, Grunge McLeod is the Veteran leader of the Blackhawks. McLeod originally lived in Butler, Pennsylvania. He and his associates in the Blackhawk Bike Club turned to crime for survival in the spring of 1998. He rather enjoys being overlord of his small corner of the earth and wants that to continue. Accordingly, he and his gang do not treat the locals too harshly as long as they kowtow and pay up.

Grunge is reasonably good as small unit leader, but lacks the brains and charisma to command a larger group than the Blackhawks or a larger area than Warren. He depends on the terror effect of his gang's screaming motorcycles. He is usually armed with a shotgun, two pistols, and a machete, and wears a steel flak jacket. He is always accompanied by a bodyguard.

Spade Jack: McLeod is very big on receiving respect, because it makes him feel like something other than a bandit.

Club 10: McLeod can be easily persuaded to employ violence and welcomes the fear it induces in others.

Malcom Xavier: Xavier is the Experienced leader of the Razz. He is from a Cincinnati slum. He and the core group of the Razz all left in the late fall of 1998 to look for food pickings in the Ohio Valley at harvest time. The group has increased and decreased in size, reaching its high of 112 when it was north of Pittsburgh, and its low of 28 when it was forced out of Erie.

Malcom has always been very loyal and supportive of the core of the Razz,

TWILIGHT: 2000

who were friends from Cincinnati. Malcom has been bitter and withdrawn since the group was forced from Erie. Several of his closer friends died there, and he feels he let them down. This makes him very short with outsiders. He treats the locals rather harshly to maintain the intimidation that provides him control and to assuage his anger.

Malcom is also undecided about what to do this year. Malcom is not the settling-down type, but is in a quandary as to where to go next. If he discovers that Oil City contains something of value, Malcom may consider trying to hold out there.

Malcom is 32 years old and is usually armed with a shotgun, a .38 Special revolver, and a knife. He is usually accompanied by a bodyguard armed with an M16A2, a knife, and two fragmentation grenades.

Spade Ace: Malcom is a charismatic leader. He holds the Razz and the few smaller marauder bands that have joined him together by force of will.

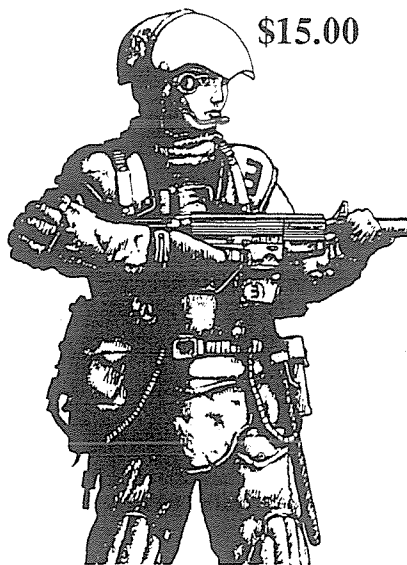
Club 7: Malcom is no stranger to violence. It does not intimidate him, and he is not afraid to use it. Ω

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his article deals with getting maps of the earth (the "real world," some call it) and a few other places, primarily for RPGs and miniatures games. A number of agencies, government and private, print and sell maps of practically every place on the globe and more than a few places off of it. Some maps are very inexpensive (a few are even free); others can cost a fortune. Many maps can be borrowed from a library, which is the best approach for the gamer on a budget.

In this article I'll cover the various types of maps relevant to gaming, and where to get them.

Scale: First, however, a short explanation of scale seems in order. Maps showing the terrain at actual size are impractical, so mapmakers reduce all the distances to a usable size. This is known as the scale. It is usually given either as a "One inch equals 50 miles" statement, or as a proportion, such as 1:50,000 (pronounced "one to fifty-thousand") or 1/1,000,000 (either a colon or a slash can be used as a separator). In both cases, this relates the distance shown on the map to the distance in the real world. In the case of the ratios, both measures are the same, so a 1/63,360 scale map would mean that one inch on the map represented 63,360 inches of ground. As it happens, a mile contains 63,360 inches, so a 1/63,360 scale could also be written as "One inch equals one mile." Likewise, a 1:50,000 scale could be stated as "one centimeter equals 50,000 centimeters" or "one centimeter equals 500 meters," or a half a kilometer.

ATLASES AND SUCH

Historical atlases are good for miniatures gamers (some specific ones are mentioned later). Tourist guides like *Fodors* also often have maps associated with them. Road atlases and tourist maps are very useful, and they have the advantage of being readily available in most bookstores. For RPG use, many referees will find that a good road atlas (the author's personal favorite is the one published annually by Rand McNally) is

all that is needed. Some people, however, like more detail than a road atlas shows or are looking for information it doesn't have.

JNC AND ONC MAPS

JNC stands for *Jet Navigation Chart*; ONC stands for *Operational Navigation Chart*. Both series of maps are issued by the United States Defense Mapping Agency and are primarily intended for use by the US military, although they have many civilian uses as well. JNCs are used for long-range navigation at high altitudes. ONCs are for flights at lower altitudes, and tend to have data on aerial hazards like broadcast towers and high tension lines as well as distinctive terrain features of use to pilots. They show rivers, mountains, cities, towns, and roads, and are relatively free of clutter. This makes them almost ideal for military-based role-playing games like *Twilight: 2000*, where long distances can be covered in the course of a game.

JNCs are drawn at a standard 1:2,000,000 scale (1 inch=32 miles or 1 centimeter=20 kilometers). Each map covers a sizable chunk of territory (three maps are enough to cover the 48 contiguous states), and such maps can be purchased for the entire globe. For most games, a single JNC should suffice, and it will probably cover too much territory. As of September 1990, they were \$2 each.

ONCs are drawn at a standard 1:1,000,000 scale (1 inch=16 miles or 1 centimeter=10 kilometers), and each map covers one-fourth as much as a JNC. One or two will cover most European countries, and they can be purchased for all of the land areas of the world. As of September 1990, they were \$2.50 each.

Both JNCs and ONCs are available from the Defense Mapping Agency (address below). DMA stock catalog number CATP6V03 covers JNCs, ONCs, and several other types of aeronautical charts and publications.

TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

Topographic maps represent details of the terrain being mapped by means of

contour lines. This makes them incredibly accurate in representing landforms, but also makes them difficult for the untrained user to read and interpret. Some topographic maps also make use of shaded-relief (various overprinted shadow effects and tints) to make terrain features easier to pick out. If you are looking for a map that will show every fold in the ground, every hill, stream, cliff, rock outcropping, road, and footpath, topographic maps will do it.

The USGS (United States Geological Survey) topographic quadrangle maps (called "top quads" by those in the know) come in a variety of standard scales and cover the whole country. The 7 1/2 minute series (where each map covers 7 1/2 minutes of latitude and longitude) vary in scale from 1/20,000 to 1/25,000, depending on how far north the area being mapped is. USGS top quads also come in two other major series: 15 minute (1/62,000 to 1/63,360) and 30 minute (1/100,000). USGS topographic maps also cover the US in 1/250,000 and 1/1,000,000 scales. In all, the USGS has more than 60,000 topographic maps covering all 50 states, and issues hundreds of other maps of the rest of the world (including Antarctica) and a number of nearby planets (see below).

Other nation's also have official mapping agencies who issue topographic maps, of which the British Ordnance Survey is the most famous.

NAUTICAL MAPS

Nautical maps are intended for use by marine navigators. They are also of some use to naval miniatures players, especially in historical or hypothetical island campaigns. Nautical maps are very sketchy about land details (except for ports), but they include details about the water that normal maps omit, such as depth soundings (sometimes using contours like topographic maps), bottom conditions (sand, silt, etc.), reefs, sandbars, exposed rocks, and other hazards to navigation.

The DMA (address below) has a large number of nautical maps and charts covering most of the world. A complete list can be had by asking for the *DMA Catalog of Maps, Charts, and Related Products, Part 2—Hydrographic Products* (\$10.00 last time I checked).

The US National Ocean Service also publishes a bewildering variety of nautical maps, covering both the seas and the various inland waterways of the United States. Write them at the address below for details.

HISTORICAL MAPS

Several companies print maps of the world of the past, ranging from reproductions of period maps to modern maps of historically significant terrain. Civil War en-

HOW TO: Obtain Maps for Gaming

By Loren K. Wiseman

thusiasts might want to invest in the *Official Military Atlas of the Civil War* (Davis, Kirkly and Perry, Fairfax Press, ISBN 0-517-415666), which contains over 1000 period maps, drawings, plans and diagrams related to battles of the American Civil War (in some cases you have the same maps as the actual participants had!). Esposito's multivolume *West Point Atlas of American Wars* was recently revised and is available again in certain specialty bookstores. *The Map Catalog* (mentioned below) has an extensive listing of historical atlases, much too long to reproduce here).

URBAN MAPS AND CITY PLANS

City plans vary in detail from general overviews to building-by-building street maps. The more expensive ones sometimes include sewer and storm drain maps as well (although for the larger cities, these are impractical and difficult for ordinary people to obtain). Tour guides to large cities (both in the US and overseas) often have street maps, and a number of commercial firms print street maps, subway maps, and the like for a variety of cities.

I have seen a series of reproduction maps of London as it appeared in the 1890s perfectly suited to RPGs such as *Cthulhu by Gaslight* or *Space: 1889*. Sadly, I am unable to remember who printed them or where they can be obtained. My suspicion is that the Ordnance Survey would know, but I have never investigated.

OUT OF THIS WORLD MAPS

For reasons the author is not completely able to fathom, the USGS has determined that part of its commission includes mapping the moon and several other bodies in the solar system. These maps may prove of use to players and referees of science-fiction RPGs or fantasy games with an outer space setting (such as *Spelljammer*). The National Geographic Society prints very good wall maps of both the moon and Mars (we at GDW made extensive use of both maps when putting together *Space: 1889*).

CIA

Interestingly enough, some of the best maps, atlases, and national factbooks in the world are produced by the Central Intelligence Agency. Even more interesting is the fact that just about anybody can buy them! A catalog of CIA maps and atlases can be ordered from:

Central Intelligence Agency
Public Affairs Office
Washington, DC 20505.

The maps themselves can be had in a Government Printing Office outlet store

(check the Yellow Pages) or from the National Technical Information Service (address below).

WHERE TO GET MAPS

Large bookstores usually have map sections and often carry atlases and tourist maps of various places. Large cities usually have one or more stores specializing in maps and may have a Government Printing Office outlet store (which carries or can order all official US government publications, including maps from various agencies). Check the Yellow Pages under *Maps*.

University libraries often have map collections, and some libraries may be what are called Federal Map Depository Libraries, meaning that they have collections of the major US government maps for public use (call the map librarian for details). Those lucky enough to live near Washington, DC can make use of the National Archives' massive map collection (the Archives will even reproduce them for you, although for some maps this can run into considerable time and expense).

State tourism offices will often provide maps (these used to be free for the asking, but these days, who knows?), as will the "Triple A" (AAA) Automotive Club. For foreign countries, the relevant embassy or consulate can give you a place to write (check a current almanac for the embassy or consulate address or phone number).

MAP CATALOG

Finally, I recommend that anyone who is interested in maps get a copy of *The Map Catalog, 2nd Edition* (Joel Makower Ed., Vintage Books, 1990, ISBN 0-679-72767-1).

This is a source-book to guide you to practically every map in existence, and includes the addresses of hundreds of government mapping agencies and private mapping companies.

The catalog also tells you where to get aerial and satellite photographs of practically every place on earth (although some of these get a little expensive).

TWILIGHT: 2000

Addresses

National Technical Information Service
US Department of Commerce
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161

Defense Mapping Agency CSC
Washington, DC, 20315-0010

NOS
National Ocean Service, Chart Sales Office
6501 Lafayette Ave.
Riverdale, MD 20737

National Geographic Society
17th & M Streets NW
Washington, DC 20036

US Geological Survey
Map Distribution Federal Center, Box 25286
Denver, CO 80225

Ordnance Survey
Ramsey Road
Southampton
SO9 4DH UK

The Scroll



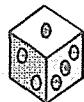
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Julian Protectorate

By Michael R. Mikesch

Interaction between Vargr and humans dominates the Julian Protectorate as it does no other region of space. The protectorate's Vilani-influenced population mixes the two races in almost equal proportion. A neighbor of the Imperium, the Julian Protectorate lies in Vargr space, dividing the Vargr Extents from the Vargr Enclaves. Imperial citizens know of the state from the Julian War (175 to 191), which is mentioned in classes on basic Imperial history. But most believe that following the war and those days of Julian glory, the protectorate faded to obscurity—one more minor state in the shadow of the Third Imperium. The Imperial leadership probably promoted this view to lessen the humiliation of the Julian War, but events of the Rebellion from 1116 on have made citizens suddenly aware of the reality of Julian power. The protectorate's navy, the Star Legion, compares well in strength with the forces under Dulinor's command at the beginning of the Rebellion. Julian diplomatic influence reaches across the Vargr Extents as far as the Windhorn Rift. The protectorate also hosts the Menderes Corporation, whose services also reach to the Windhorn.

HISTORY

During the First Imperium, nearly all systems coreward of Vland Sector fell under the control of the Makhidkarun bureau. It shared with other bureaux only two regions—the Mendan Main and the sphere of resource worlds to which it led. The sphere straddled the border between Mendan and Amdukan sectors and encompassed nearly 100 stars. Today's Julian Protectorate fully encloses this same region.

The sphere lured veteran Solomani traders even before the end of the Interstellar Wars (–2219). The traders' experience and familiarity with the region came to the attention of Emperor Hiroshi II, who replaced the military governors with responsible merchants. While most areas around the Imperium continued to decay, the trader families sustained the region with minimal Imperial support.

Scorpion Company: The success of the sphere attracted the attention of the Scorpion Company, a growing Solomani development corporation. In cooperation with Sharurshid, Scorpion annually recruited thousands of colonists. Most were Vilani, eager to escape the decay of their worlds, but some were Solomani, attracted by grants of authority waiting at the new colonies. A few were shanghaied by recruiters in pursuit of commissions. All streamed toward Antares in cold sleep, then were redirected to colonies. Some went to worlds near Antares, while others branched out coreward along the Mendan Main or went to virgin worlds beyond the Imperial borders in Gashikan and Trenchan sectors.

Coming of the Vargr: As the Imperium waned, Vargr streamed into the coreward regions, which were under Makhidkarun authority. Although initially welcomed as a resource by developers, the Vargr migrants were inevitably followed by corsairs and raiders. Conflict between Humaniti and Vargr was common through the Long Night, as the two races had not yet learned how to coexist. Already poor, relations in Gashikan Sector took a disastrous turn during –1658. Vargr corsairs dropped nuclear weapons on and looted the garden world of Gashikan, while the human population suffered global catastrophe. The shock of the Sack of Gashikan and reprisals against neighboring Vargr communities set off a bloody chain of events, inflaming race hatred as far rimward as Antares.

Vargr Race Wars: The Second Empire of Gashikan founded itself in –1646 on the belief that the rise of the Vargr threatened Humaniti's very existence. Early efforts to destroy Vargr communities and repel the corsairs from Gashikan Subsector fell short of total success. When the Vargr struck back, human fears intensified, fueling a fanatical determination to wipe out the aliens before the humans were exterminated. As these race wars continued with each succeeding generation, fear and hatred of the Vargr

rooted itself deeper into Gashikan society. The xenophobia infected other communities rimward. Gashikan worked feverishly to bring other star systems under its "protection," and many accepted. Others refused Gashikan's authority, eventually resulting in a fierce war of unification. At its greatest extent, the Second Empire of Gashikan encompassed most of Gashikan Sector, and half of Trenchan and Mendan. It also spilled about five parsecs into Meshan and Gzaekfueg sectors, where the Empire fought most of the later wars against the Vargr. The Vargr Race Wars ended about –1000, although the Gashikan Navy continued to violently defend against Vargr incursions. No Vargr lived long within the borders of the Empire. The end of the wars heralded the start of a slow reversal in the anti-Vargr prejudice that dominated the entire area.

Vargr Slavery: Grudging tolerance for the Vargr began in the rimward halves of Mendan and Amdukan, areas outside the borders of the Second Empire of Gashikan. Humans began to accept Vargr settlements on undesirable planets, as long as they posed no threat. When humans did intervene, they increasingly preferred to enslave the Vargr rather than exterminate them. Vargr slavery grew into an enormous industry that reached its height about –300. By this time, the Vargr population in human space outside of Gashikan had swelled to record levels. The number of freed Vargr finally exceeded those enslaved. Soon after this, the Menderes Corporation began its meteoric rise.

Menderes Emancipation: The Menderes Corporation was by far the largest company on Asimikigir (Amdukan 0223) and the most powerful. Its rise was largely due to the fact that it owned millions of Vargr who made up most of its labor force. Unlike its corporate peers, however, Menderes went to great lengths to assure that its Vargr led happy and rewarding lives. Karik Menderes, the family head at the time, emancipated all Menderes' Vargr in –321, making them into employees rather than slaves. Although motivated by economic reasons, this event sparked a movement on Asimikigir that made slavery illegal onworld by –302. This trend quickly spread to other worlds. The Menderes Corporation founded its policies on the belief that racism harmed business. The company had no interest in convincing the rest of the universe of this wisdom—it merely set aside such feelings for the sake of its commercial dealings. Still, these policies influenced the reshaping of the area. Vargr migrating to the area found less resentment and more opportunity for lucrative exchange with humans.

Tran Menderes again broke precedent in –275 by accepting a Vargr offer to carry Menderes goods offplanet. Until that time, Kudukara Lines, the principal transport line of the Empire of Gashikan, carried all goods for the region. Few worlds aside from those in Gashikan had the ability to construct starships—but the Vargr in Meshan did.

Menderes-Kudukara Trade Wars: By establishing a relationship with these first traders, more foreign Vargr soon approached Menderes, in whom they found a receptive ear. The new association received regionwide criticism and controversy, even on Asimikigir. Tran, however, remained undaunted. In –247, the Menderes Corporation completed construction of its first starship, the *Meander*, in a yard built with Vargr technology and assistance. Tran Menderes died as it set out on its maiden voyage. The new merchant fleet at once entered competition with Kudukara Lines. The two fought a half-dozen trade wars, with Menderes the usual victor. Menderes grew to connect the Vargr Extents to the Enclaves and profited by the Vargr commerce it carried.

Coming of the Third Imperium: The region paid little attention to the rise of the Sylean Federation or its audacity in renaming itself the Third Imperium in year 0. This changed during the aftermath of the Antarean Pacification Campaign, begun in 89. Regions that once belonged to the Menderes' trading sphere fell to the Third Imperium and the corporations that formed its base. Important Antarean families that resisted the Imperium fled coreward and brought with them their resentment of the Sylean upstarts. During this time, the Imperium little tolerated the Vargr. Its treatment of Vargr-controlled Corridor Sector typified its attitude. As colonial ships passed through Corridor bound for the frontier, the Imperium more frequently resorted to intimidation and takeovers than friendly diplomacy.

Menderes' Anti-Imperium Subterfuge: The Menderes family began a propaganda campaign across the coreward sectors, giving both races common cause against the Imperium. The Menderes family anticipated the Imperium would try to claim the region formerly controlled by the Makhidkarun bureau and now occupied by the Vargr. Indeed, it did. In 166, the Imperium sent the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service and the Diplomatic Corps as ambassadors of good will—the first move in its attempt to reabsorb the region. But for the most part, these overtures received only a cool reception because of the Menderes' influence.

For more information, see Vilani & Vargr (Digest Group Publications).

Special thanks to Stephen Koehler and the History of the Imperium Working Group.

Julian War: Frustrated, Martin I sent the Imperial fleets to drive into Mendan Sector, beginning the Julian War in 175. The people of the region displayed surprising resistance and a most unexpected trait: unity. Before the war, the region was divided into dozens of independent confederations. But during it, they rallied to the Asimikigir Confederation, the Menderes Corporation, and Julian Menderes in particular when he became regent and Menderes family head in 178. Both humans and Vargr respected Julian as a great leader. Many served him with fanatical loyalty. Combining Vargr resourcefulness and human determination, protectorate forces, collectively called the Star Legion, repulsed the Imperial fleets from the region by 185. They continued to press into the Imperium to force a formal peace agreement, finally given in 191.

Imperial Concessions and the Beginning of the League of Antares: In the final resolution, the Imperium awarded a cluster of 12 worlds near Antares autonomous status. Although formerly Imperial possessions, they had been captured by the protectorate in its drive coreward. In recognition of the cluster's newfound independence, the protectorate withdrew from its bases there. But before so doing, it placed several Antarean families, refugees of the Pacification Campaigns, in positions of power within the cluster. These 12 worlds eventually came to be known as the League of Antares.

Permanent Protectorate and Its "Reactivations": In the year of its victory, 191, the Julian Protectorate transformed itself from an emergency organization into a permanent authority and established the Star Legion as its armed force. Since its purpose was to resist the advances of the Third Imperium, the protectorate functioned less as an interstellar state and more as a defense alliance.

Grand Survey: The Julian Protectorate, as a binding force for the region, waned with the passing of the years following the Julian War, but it surged again during four separate occasions. The first occurred during the original Imperial Grand Survey (published in 420). Scout Service survey cruisers entering the coreward sectors sparked concerns that the Imperium meant to use gathered intelligence in a renewed war. Many states refused the Scouts permission to operate in their systems. Moreover, when incidents involving clandestine Scout missions began to occur, good will between the coreward states and the Imperium quickly dissolved. The Julian Protectorate dispatched the Star Legion to carefully patrol the entire region. Until publication of the Grand Survey, the protectorate engaged the Imperium's survey ships in a cat-and-mouse contest. The Imperium nevertheless managed to survey most of the region to detailed Class III standards.

Vargr Mission and Hidden War: The second surge in protectorate influence happened during the Vargr Mission (486 to 499), which was one of a series, collectively called the Alien Missions, started by Martin III in 382. Having given attention to most of the neighboring regions, the Scout Service moved on to send teams of xenologists, journalists, and diplomats into the Extents to learn more about the Vargr.

Politics, however, troubled the Vargr Mission. Displeasure with the Imperium had receded since the Grand Survey. However, emissaries from radical anti-Imperial factions within the Julian Protectorate preceded the Scouts, encouraging local governments to turn back the Imperial teams. Where these emissaries failed, they resorted to terrorism, often hiring corsair bands to attack the Scout Service ships.

Cleon IV sent Imperial Naval Intelligence to counter anti-Imperial activities, particularly terrorism. Naval Intelligence responded to the challenge with an enormous effort that neutralized the anti-Imperials. But this Hidden War (488 to 494) was widely publicized in the Julian Protectorate, accentuating negative feelings toward the Imperium. Although the Scouts faced no further interference, they shortened the Vargr Mission and moved on.

Second Survey: The third return from dormancy occurred during the Second Survey (published in 1065). In many ways, events during the Second Survey paralleled those of the first. The Imperium, however, sent far fewer clandestine missions and relied more heavily on diplomacy. Still, some damaging incidents did occur between secret survey cruisers and Star Legion patrols.

Utovogh Tirades: The recent Utovogh Tirades sparked the fourth resurgence of the protectorate. A favoring of the Julian Protectorate has seemed to go hand in hand with the soaring of anti-Imperial feeling across the Vargr Extents. Anticipating belligerence, the protectorate has built up the Star Legion to its largest size since the Julian War.

JULIAN PROTECTORATE

The Julian Protectorate is a confederation of confederations. Individual states range broadly in size, many being only countries on balkanized worlds.

All conduct their own diplomacy and keep their own armed forces, giving little power to the central authority on Asimikigir.

The protectorate, however, does give structure to the community of states. It mediates disputes, provides a set of interstellar laws, and promotes communication and cooperation. It also has a standing armed service used for patrols and in crisis situations.

The borders of the Julian Protectorate are not easy to define, since membership in the protectorate varies by degrees. Until recently, Imperial cartographers drew the protectorate as a state on the four corners of Mendan, Amdukan, Empty Quarter, and Antares Sectors. This is the Julian core, but some isolated "associate member" worlds exist as far away as Windhorn Sector.

Since the beginning of the Rebellion, revised charts also include even those confederations with a lesser involvement than the core worlds. Current charts show the protectorate enveloping all of Amdukan Sector and extending into all adjacent sectors.

The spinward half of the Julian Protectorate is by far more active commercially. Here lies the Mendan Main used by Vilani traders for millennia. More importantly, this is where the protectorate interfaces with the Imperium, Gashikan, and Vargr trade routes leading all the way to Lair.

The protectorate's trailing half overlaps much of the region known as the Vargr Enclaves, a less dynamic region of Vargr space. Worlds here tend to remain independent of an interstellar community except for direct membership in the Julian bloc. The inhabitants here lack significant neighbors other than the K'kree, who regard Julians coldly, at best.

Like the Imperium, the protectorate uses Galanglic as its official

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Chronology

Year	Event
-2180	Emperor Hiroshi II begins assigning traders as planetary governors in Mendan and Amdukan Sectors.
-1776	Collapse of the Rule of Man. The Long Night begins.
-1658	Sack of Gashikan.
-1646	Second Empire of Gashikan founded.
-1427	Project Wolvesbane clears Gashikan Sector of Vargr settlements.
-1000	Race wars against the Vargr effectively end.
-612	Legion of Breskain founded in Gashikan.
-321	Karik Menderes transfers corporate-owned Vargr to employee status.
-302	Slavery abolished on Asimikigir.
-300	Vargr slavery reaches its height in Mendan and Amdukan sectors.
-247	Menderes Corporation launches its first starship.
-222	Hhkar begin seizing worlds in Amdukan Sector.
0	Third Imperium established.
47	Hhkar expansions end.
89	Antarean Pacification Campaign.
166	Imperial Interstellar Scout Service and the Diplomatic Corps enter the sectors coreward of the Imperium.
175	Julian War begins.
185	Star Legion repulses Imperial fleets from coreward sectors.
191	Julian War ends. Original League of Antares established. Julian Protectorate founded.
420	Imperial Grand Survey published.
488	Hidden War begins.
494	Hidden War ends.
622	Soegz becomes the first Vargr archduke of Antares.
1065	Second Survey published. 1070 Second Empire of Gashikan collapses in civil war.
1085	Menderes Corporation begins trade in the Imperial Domain of Antares.
1116	Strephon assassinated. The Rebellion begins.
1117	Domain of Antares declares independence, calling itself the League of Antares.
1118	League of Antares joins with the Julian Protectorate.
1120	League of Antares separates again from Julian Protectorate.

interstellar language, specifically a broad dialect called Transform. This is the same dialect found in the Antares region of the Imperium. The roots of Transform extend back to the Rule of Man and Transform's spread and promotion by the Scorpion Company. During the Third Imperium, the dialect evolved slightly to accommodate Vargr. Interface trading introduced these linguistic variations into the Antares region as well.

While Vargr and humans populate the Julian sectors in almost equal proportion, the distribution is not homogeneous. Individual world populations vary widely in their human/Vargr ratios. As a rule, though, Vargr are less common closer to Gashikan Sector.

Other races also exist in the protectorate, but humans and Vargr clearly predominate. Most others tend to remain on their respective homeworlds. Two additional races also play an interstellar role: a large, somewhat aggressive saurian race called the Hhkar and, to a lesser degree, the Bwaps (see "Contact! News," JTAS 11).

EMPIRE OF GASHIKAN

The relationships between human and Vargr are both the region's greatest shame and grandest triumph. The race wars following the Sack of Gashikan have long ended, yet remnants of those hideous days and the old hatreds continue, despite modern enlightenment. To fully understand this aspect of the Julian Protectorate, our discussion must also include the Empire of Gashikan, which is its neighbor, predecessor, and in some ways represents the antithesis of its ideals.

From its height during the Long Night, the Second Empire of Gashikan declined into stagnation inversely with the rise of the Julian Protectorate. The Empire's individual worlds grew increasingly self-centered, but the shell of government continued until the Empire was finally shattered by civil war in 1070.

The Third Empire of Gashikan, also called the Trenchan Empire, formed eight years later. A cluster of worlds in Trenchan Sector dominated the new state rather than Gashikan itself. Many worlds of the Second Empire declined admission to the Third. All three confederations in Mendan Sector formerly tied to Gashikan instead associated themselves with the Julian Protectorate.

The Empire is not a serious overt threat to the Julians. Although envious of the dynamic protectorate, the Empire has regressed technologically, economically, and militarily. Nonetheless, like a specter from

the region's past, it retains a subtle influence throughout the protectorate and even on Asimikigir itself.

An odd dichotomy of ideals exists in the region, with Asimikigir at one pole and Gashikan the other. In most of the Confederation of Asimikigir, Vargr and humans coexist with a degree of harmony perhaps unmatched anywhere else. The cooperation between the two has brought both races prosperity.

On Gashikan, however, Vargr are killed on sight—on the rare occasions when any dare to travel there. Less reactionary worlds of the Empire often enslave Vargr. When it was learned Vargr were Terrestrial canines genetically manipulated by the Ancients, many humans of the Empire thereafter regarded them as abominations rather than true sophonts, thus undeserving of basic rights.

Between these two extremes range many attitudes, all particularly well displayed in Mendan Sector. In contemporary times, though, Mendan Sector as a whole has leaned closer to the ideals found on Asimikigir than those native to Gashikan. Even those Julian confederations formerly of Gashikan origins now give nominal support to Vargr cooperation.

JULIAN SOCIETY: LIFE IN ASIMIKIGIR

Asimikigir has a dual-species culture. While informed Imperial visitors expect a minimum of segregation between the two races, they seldom come prepared for what they actually find.

Astonishingly, better relations exist in general between humans and Vargr than between ethnic groups on the world within the respective species. This seems intuitively impossible in light of the Imperium's long history of confrontation with the Vargr. However, some Imperial worlds also successfully mix human and nonhuman societies, leading xenosociologists to speculate that humans find a member of a different species less threatening than another human, with the same holding true for Vargr.

Even in multiracial Imperial societies, it is not uncommon for humans to prefer nonhuman doctors. Patients are often more comfortable revealing private matters to a nonhuman. Also, nonhumans are frequently called on to mediate disputes between humans. In these instances, nonhumans seem to offer a greater assurance of detachment and objectivity.

What makes Asimikigir special, though, is the degree to which the two races interactively share the same culture. And this closeness is not confined to Asimikigir alone. Similar dual-species cultures have also formed on nearby worlds in the Asimikigir Cluster, as well. The Julians have apparently discovered something largely overlooked for centuries: simply put, Vargr and humans like one another.

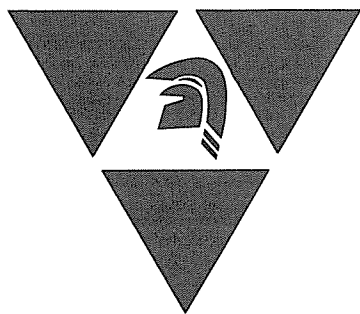
An affinity between the two races should not be surprising, since both races evolved on the same world. In fact, both are closely related taxonomically. While different, Vargr and humans see less alienness in each other than in other species, allowing understanding and association to come more easily. A goodwill tour of Vargr to Terra made this point clear to the Solomani in 489. As part of the Alien Missions, the return of Vargr to their world of origin was publicized far in advance. But these visitors sparked a wave of public affection on Terra previously unmatched by the arrival of any other alien group.

Society on Asimikigir is much more complicated than that found on most worlds of the Imperium. Humans and Vargr, males and females, are all equal, but society fully accommodates their differences as well. Traditional relationships continue to exist among humans, such as the bond between mates, bonds among family members, friendship bonds, and so on. However, the integration of Vargr has created relationships unfamiliar to Imperial citizens.

Julians of both species use the term "panet" to refer to friendship with one of another race. They give the relationship a special distinction in their social protocols. Some social functions in the Imperium might call on an attendee to bring a friend; others, a spouse. Some functions in the protectorate expressly require panets.

In trying to explain the panet bond to Imperials, some Julians have likened the relationship to that between a person and a pet. The feelings of affection are quite similar. However, the same degree of respect exists between the two as one would expect in any relationship between sophonts. Also, panets ignore the distinction of who is the "person" and who is the "pet," since each, in a sense, sees the other as the pet from his own perspective.

Panets may often be rather intimate, a fact often difficult to accept by non-Julians of either species. For instance, it is not uncommon for a human to scratch and rub his Vargr panet in much the same fashion as one would a dog. While this might delight the Vargr panet, the display could well shock other Vargr from outside the Julian culture.



Emblems

The Menderes Corporation adopted the Trojan helmet inscribed within a circle as its emblem. The family used this since "Menderes" was the modern name of "Maiandros," the river that flowed by the ancient city of Ilium, or Troy.

After the formation of the Julian Protectorate, the Star Legion adopted the Trojan helmet inscribed within a stylized triangle. This changed to three solid triangles surrounding the helmet in 1118. The new emblem was derived from the symbol for Antares to celebrate its joining the protectorate in that year.

Actually, only fleets of the Asimikigir Navy continued to bear the Trojan helmet. Naval vessels from other Julian confederations also used the cluster of three triangles, but placed a symbol specific to themselves in the middle. Antares ships bore the Imperial sunburst at the center, by popular insistence. Star Legion ships unattached to a confederation kept the field blank.

After Antares separated from the protectorate again, its symbol reverted back to the line of three triangles. The insignias of the Julian Protectorate, however, did not change.

MENDERES CORPORATION

About the time of the Nth Interstellar War (-2235 to -2219), a family of Solomani traders, the Menderes, established lucrative routes along the Mendan Main. Later, many Solomani entrepreneurs in the area were appointed planetary governors when Hiroshi II came to power. A few such posts went to the Menderes family, among them that of Asimikigir.

Menderes Establishes Itself: The Menderes established a commercial dynasty spanning all of Asimikigir that endured the entire Long Night (-1776 to 0) and the attendant economic and technological retrenchments. While the Menderes Corporation never sought a monopoly, it collected so much power that it could not effectively be challenged in any situation that really mattered. It maintained this as an objective even when it broke into space again in -247. Menderes worked mightily to displace Kudukara Lines. But once assured of dominance, Menderes relaxed its pressure on the aging company.

The Rise of the Sylean Corporations: The rise of the Sylean corporations and their alliance with their Vilani contemporaries presented a most unwelcome intrusion into the Menderes economic sphere. The Pacification Campaigns (76 to 120) were paralleled by trade wars that ultimately forced Menderes to surrender its markets in Lishun, Antares, and the Empty Quarter. Ever since, the corporation has jealously guarded its remaining markets and routes among the Vargr Extents.

Menderes and Vargr Economics: Menderes succeeded because of its intimate understanding of Vargr economics. In contrast, the Imperials proved unable to handle the alien system on more than a superficial basis. Where it could, Menderes promoted Vargr companies, but worked against those in the Extents run by humans. These human companies provided inroads for Imperial corporations and were also too stable, undermining Menderes' principal advantage: Without bringing resources to bear on powerful Vargr competitors, Menderes could get nearly anything it wanted just by waiting long enough; eventually, the Vargr organization would destabilize.

Menderes' Effect on Julian Society: The Menderes Corporation has always emphasized its mercantile nature, downplaying its social policies as mere attempts to foster a more lucrative commercial environment. Nevertheless, Menderes' effect on Julian society has been profound, and most Julians see the company as a leader in promoting Vargr-human relations, even if a passive one.

For instance, the company has for centuries promoted kuspar, floater, and saliball—today the protectorate's most popular sports—in the public media. Importantly, these sports all make use of mixed Vargr-human teams, deliberately designed to highlight the two races' complementary abilities and aptitudes.

These sports also reflect the way Menderes functions. Vargr tend to occupy certain positions within the company, humans others. The organization has tailored itself to take the most advantage of the strengths of both species. At the same time, the system bars no one from advancement and easily adjusts to the proportion of humans and Vargr available in any locale.

Menderes' Divisions: The Menderes Corporation's many operations are grouped into divisions, as outlined below:

Transportation and Communication Division: Operates the corporation's fleet of interstellar cargo ships and provides courier service to subscriber worlds as far as Windhorn Sector.

Space Systems Division: Responsible for the construction of all space-related products, from warships to automated stations to vacc suit components. In the Vargr Extents, it sells more subsystems and replacement parts than complete ships.

Intelligence Division: Excellent intelligence is needed to operate in Vargr space without relying on serendipity. This division also keeps an eye on competitors, particularly Imperial ones, and engages in covert operations and industrial espionage as necessary.

Weapon Systems Division: Produces everything from handguns to advanced planetary defense systems. These products compete well on the Vargr market; Menderes' gauss weapons and mass drivers are felt to be of superior quality.

Heavy Equipment Division: This division manufactures such items as earth movers, fusion drills, farm machinery, large power plants, and municipal mass transit systems.

Electronics Division: Markets all manner of products related to electronics and computers. More than any other, this division carefully investigates the multitude of Vargr innovations and incorporates the best.

Resource Development Division:

Most Menderes subsidiaries are attached to this division. Over the centuries, it has invested in many agricultural colonies, mining settlements, and production centers that have since matured. Its latest efforts lie in Arzul Sector.

Imperial Division: The newest division, the Imperial Division was created in 1085 to administer operations extending into the Imperium. In that year, Menderes Corporation negotiated an agreement with Archduke Ngaez of Antares for trading rights within his domain.

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IMPERIAL RELATIONS

Since the Imperial Civil War (604 to 622), the Julians have had little cause to fear serious aggression from the Third Imperium. Yet, due to its founding traditions, the protectorate sees the Imperium as an ever-present threat to its ideals and systems of government.

Despite Solomani cultural influences, this outlook has endured among the Julians because they have returned to embracing Vilani philosophies that value slow, controlled change. This preference for slow change has proved to be an enormous strength in interacting with the rest of the Vargr Extents. It also counterbalances and complements the more mercurial nature of Vargr residents within the protectorate itself.

The Menderes Corporation has also steered public attitudes to nurture suspicions of the Imperium. Keeping the Imperium out of the Vargr Extents has long been in the company's best interests. When anti-Imperial sentiment runs high, this usually works to Menderes' advantage.

To further help secure the Extents from the Imperium, Menderes strives to devalue the Imperial credit on Vargr markets while promoting the Julian unit of currency, the star. It also encourages its clients to adopt Julian standards as opposed to Imperial ones. By choice, the protectorate uses old Vilani standards, from the calendar system to computer protocols. This makes Imperial components and systems deliberately incompatible with Menderes products.

Paradoxically, the Domain of Antares has enjoyed good relations with the protectorate since soon after the Civil War, when Soegz replaced Archduke Glazdon Deirdin. The Deirdins led the Antares Pacification Campaign for the Imperium in 89, and again played an active role in the Julian War. Their heavy-handed attitudes have colored Julian impressions about the Imperium ever since.

Still, the Julians have long felt a kinship with the Antarean worlds for the common heritage they share. They more freely express this now that Soegz' line holds the archducal patent. Unfortunately, the Vargr archdukes lacked the authority to take an active role in improving Julian-Imperial relations until after the Fourth Frontier War (1082 to 1084).

REBELLION

The shattering of the Imperium has brought sweeping changes to the Julian Protectorate, if only because of the magnitude of the event. Spinward, in Windhorn Sector, the Vilani megacorporations are today Menderes' most serious challengers. Previously, Makhidkarun satisfied itself with merely servicing the few predominantly human worlds remaining in the Vargr Extents. Now, however, the Vilani are using these worlds as footholds by which to infiltrate the Vargr markets.

Most troubling of all, the Vilani display a surprising measure of competence in their new dealings with the Vargr. Previously, Imperial attempts to carry on extensive trade in the Extents were clumsy and self-defeating. The Vilani, however, are learning quickly. Although they lack the centuries of experience possessed by Menderes, the combined resources of Sharurshid, Makhidkarun, Naasirka, and a branch of Zirunkariish more than make up for this.

Trade War: To protect itself, Menderes has resorted to a trade war in concert with other major Vargr corporations also damaged by the Vilani intrusions. So far, Menderes has taken little direct action, although it has regularly provided intelligence to Vland's rivals. Recently, though, the Menderes intelligence division has sent covert agents as far away as Dagudashaag Sector in order to provoke more trouble for Vland with its Imperial neighbors.

Archduke Brzk: Closer to home, Archduke Brzk has had a substan-

tial impact on Julian affairs. A leader of mediocre importance until the Rebellion, Brzk quickly distinguished himself as a diplomatic genius with a remarkable ability to maneuver and manipulate political elements. Commentators suggest the chaos of the Rebellion transformed Imperial space into an environment where a Vargr leader could excel. While most human leaders have been helplessly buffeted by the turbulent political winds, Brzk has learned to soar on them.

The wave of anti-Imperial feeling among Julian Vargr carried Brzk to general public attention in the protectorate. Having achieved popularity among the Vargr early, he refrained from using this advantage until he won a measure of support from the protectorate's human population as well.

In his politics, Brzk presented two different faces that he ultimately merged into one. To Julians, he presented himself and the Antarean peoples not as Imperials, but as brethren resentful of Capital's rule. To Antareans, he denied any disloyalty to the Imperium but fervently condemned Lucan's rule. The League of Antares had no choice but to operate apart from the Imperial structure, at least for a time.

Antares Joins the Protectorate: On 012-1118, the League of Antares joined with the protectorate as one of its members, albeit the largest single confederation to belong to the protectorate. Soon thereafter, other fleets of the Star Legion joined with the Antares Fleet in the battles against Lucan's forces. Brzk knew that after a time, the war would grow unpopular in the protectorate. But while the league and the protectorate were joined, the archduke painted Emperor Lucan, now their common enemy, as the embodiment of all that was hateful about the Imperium to the Julians. By using Lucan as a scapegoat, he hoped the Julians might consider joining with the Imperium, once it was purged of Lucan. Even if Brzk failed to ascend to the Iridium Throne himself, he would preside over all of the Domain of Antares, not just the rimward half.

Antares Leaves: Through 1118 and 1119, Julians and Antareans were comrades in arms. By 1120, though, people in the protectorate began to grow resentful of Antares for having dragged them into a war not theirs to fight. Rather than wait for the controversy to build, Brzk gracefully separated from the protectorate, skillfully employing another of his diplomatic pretexts—he used the admission of two Vargr-prejudiced confederations into the protectorate as an excuse to leave it.

At that time, the protectorate councils were considering whether to invite two confederations in the spinward part of Mendan Sector, Zuugabish and Bammesuka, into full membership in the protectorate. Both were originally part of the Second Empire of Gashikan and still practiced racial mistreatment on many of their worlds. Taking the role of an active defender of Julian ideals, Brzk demanded that no invitation be sent and no petition for full membership be accepted. He lost, and the league renounced its own membership in 1120.

Continuing Relations with Antares: By 1120, though, the state of Lucan's forces was such that the League of Antares could stand on its own. Also, a solid bond between Antares and the Julian Protectorate remained despite the technical separation. Today, Julian confederations to rimward still maintain particularly close ties to the league.

JULIAN WORLD GENERATION

The generation of worlds in Julian space differs little from the standard Generation system. Roll for naval and military bases as in the **Referee's Manual** (page 24, step 11). Use *J* as the code for a naval base, *M* for a military base, and *F* for both. *Do not* roll for a scout base. *Do not* roll for a corsair base even if the population is entirely Vargr.

Julian worlds usually have a mix of Vargr and humans. At the referee's option, the percentage of the population that is Vargr may be determined and recorded as a remark code. Roll 2D–2. This result, multiplied by 10, is the Vargr population percentage. Record this as a remark code in the form *Vn* (*n* is the result of the throw). *V8* would mean 80% Vargr, *V0* is less than 5% Vargr, etc. If the result was 10 (indicating 100% Vargr), record this as *Vw* to indicate a Vargr world or one with greater than 95% Vargr. The referee may apply die modifiers as suits the area. For instance, within Mendan Sector, worlds along the Meshan frontier might have a DM +6; those near Gashikan might have a DM –6.

In naming a world, roll 2D–2 again. If the result is less than the Vargr population code, apply a Vargr name to it. Otherwise, apply a human name—either Vilani or something of Terran origin.

MENDAN SECTOR

Much of the coreward half of Mendan Sector formerly belonged to the Second Empire of Gashikan. Before the Sack of Gashikan, many of

these worlds had Vargr populations. Today, most of their old settlements are desolate ruins, the Vargr having fled the race wars or died in biological or chemical attacks. Humans and Vargr alike tend to be superstitious about these places.

Commonwealth of Mendan, Confederation of Bammesuka, and Zuugabish Tripartite: The three states in the coreward half of the sector are surviving fragments of the Second Empire of Gashikan. These are the Commonwealth of Mendan, the Confederation of Bammesuka, and the Zuugabish Tripartite.

During the First Imperium, the world of Mendan was for millennia the terminus of the Mendan Main, and remained second only to Lasla in importance in the sector. Mendan is also a powerful political force in the protectorate, contributing a strongly conservative element.

Julians know Bammesuka and Zuugabish well for their "old money" families that have heavy investments elsewhere in the protectorate. Along with the Sarkan Constellation, Julians collectively refer to them today as the Outer States. None have true governments with the authority to enforce interstellar agreements, although they have affiliations with the Julian Protectorate.

Sarkan Constellation: The Sarkan Constellation was originally part of the Hormine League, a larger state in Meshan that broke apart due to racial tension. While the Sarkan population is predominately Vargr, humans retain political control.

Principality of Neniis: The Principality of Neniis, in Ikdaalon Subsector, disbanded during 1116. Like Sarkan, it was another remnant of the Hormine League. It suffered severe attacks by Vargr corsairs due to its status as a client state of the Imperium. This brought about its collapse, and the area remained turbulent until the establishment of the Antares Pact.

Antares Pact: Soon after Antares separated itself from the Julian Protectorate in 1120, Brzk turned his attentions to Lishun and the Vargr marauding over that sector. The archduke successfully dominated (for the most part) the three major corsair bands that ranged along the Lishun-Antares border. As a result of the Antares Pact, they administer the buffer area as would an interstellar government, but usually answer to Brzk. Squadrons from the Antares Pact work in Lishun for Brzk to help bring order to that sector.

Antares Crescent: The Pirbarish Starlane, Ukhanzi Coordinate, and Rukadukaz Republic all belong to the rimward area the Julians call the Antares Crescent. These are separated from the rest of the sector by a gap of stars about two parsecs wide, bridged by the Mendan Main. Although they traditionally carried on regular trade with Antares Sector, ties grew especially close during the period in which the League of Antares joined with the Julian Protectorate.

Lasla and the Pirbarish Starlane: Lasla is the classical capital of Mendan Sector and administrative center for the Mendan Main. It named its confederation, the Pirbarish Starlane, after the original Vilani authority dedicated to patrolling the main. Lasla was second in importance in the region only to Gashikan until the Julian War, after which Asimikigir became dominant. During its occupation by the Imperium, Lasla coordinated a fierce guerrilla resistance among all occupied worlds.

Vugurar Dominion: The Vugurar Dominion is predominantly Vargr, and the residents of these worlds are sensitive to anti-Vargr sentiment from the outside. Although the Dominion's representatives in Julian councils tend to be vocally argumentative, its commitment to the protectorate remains firm.

Asimikigir Confederation: While most of the Asimikigir Confederation falls within Mendan Sector, its capital, Asimikigir (Amdukan 0223), lies in the adjacent trailing sector. The Asimikigir Confederation, Lumda Dower, and states of the Antares Crescent make up what Imperials traditionally thought of as the core of the Julian Protectorate.

Lumda Dower: Lumda Dower is ruled by a constitutional monarchy. While the Lord of Lumda may only be a human male, the heir apparent is always a member of his wife's family. The lord presides only over the executive branch. Vargr control the judicial branch, while both races occupy two separate houses of the legislative branch.

ADVENTURING IN THE PROTECTORATE

The single most important characteristic of Julian space is the presence of Vargr. The environment still resembles the Imperium in most ways and need not be considered "alien." Yet, the Vargr will provide key elements in Julian adventures. Referees using the Julian Protectorate setting should refer heavily to the Vargr sections of *Vilani & Vargr: The Coreward Races*. All the material concerning encounters with Vargr

and their use in adventures applies to the Julian Protectorate as well.

Added to this are all the complications created by mixing two races together. Relationships between the human and Vargr populace will vary from system to system.

Race Relations: A ready theme useful in adventures is the conflict between race hatred and interspecies harmony. While the relationships between humans and Vargr continue to improve in the region, progress is slow. Conversely, the bitterness of events following the Sack of Gashikan has not entirely died. Many Vargr cultures still hate humans, even if their histories no longer recount the race wars. Worse, among some humans, the archaic ideals that fostered the race wars remain quite active and destructive. Commercial investors from Bammesuka and Zuugabish frequently and deliberately favor humans at Vargr expense. And the intrigues worked by citizens of Gashikan tend to be most insidious, making them quite suitable as villains for adventures.

Imperial Prejudice: If the player characters come from the Imperium, they will regularly encounter difficulties in the protectorate. Many Julians treat Imperials rather coldly and are often uncooperative. They may even do things to worsen an already difficult situation for the group, regardless of what Imperial faction they say they support.

Antares: Antares, of course, is an exception. Characters travelling with Antarean papers and registration can expect treatment as if they merely came from a neighboring confederation. Julians do not universally like Brzk—in fact, many strongly disagree with his politics. But, despite the opposing rhetoric, citizens of the protectorate generally do not see Brzk or the Antareans as essentially Imperial. For this reason, characters that present themselves as “Antarean” will seldom suffer the prejudice directed against “Imperials.”

The controversy within the protectorate over Brzk may itself lead to adventures. Characters may find themselves involuntarily dragged into political situations simply because they are “Antarean.” Or they could be hired by the league to perform certain tasks.

A campaign could even involve Trasilon, the league’s intelligence organization, with the PCs as agents. As such, the overall purpose of their work in the protectorate would be to bring the protectorate and Antares closer together and to promote the archduke’s influence over the area.

Trade and Corporations in the Protectorate: Traders accustomed to the pre-Rebellion Imperium operated in an environment with one interstellar government and many competing megacorporations. The situation is reversed in the protectorate. Local authorities usually administer their own ports and space lanes (with protectorate guidance.) And there is but one business entity that approaches the size of a megacorporation: Menderes. Few companies in the protectorate can claim to be even subsectorwide.

Interstellar corporations as patrons will not be as common as when adventuring in Imperial space. Interstellar politics will dominate the setting. As with the nations of contemporary Earth, confederations conduct trade, compete for resources, threaten war over incidents, advance their own prestige, etc. Travellers could easily get up in their affairs from time to time.

LIBRARY DATA

Breskain, Legion of: A Gashikan order of knighthood founded in –612 dedicated to combating the Vargr. Similar orders preceded the Legion, but were absorbed in later centuries. Today, the order retains its original purpose, albeit without government sanction. Knights of Breskain own and operate a number of mercenary organizations, selling their services to any human government or corporation in conflict with Vargr.

Dekhii (1321): A world with an almost equal mix of Vargr and humans. The two races have fought almost a century in a seesaw struggle for control over the water world’s only island.

Gashikan (Gashikan 2732): Gashikan’s primary was known as a 334-day variable by Terran astronomers, who originally called it X Ophiuchi. The star cycles drive the planetary seasons more than does the world’s orbit. Hostility toward Vargr is a cultural imperative on Gashikan. The world constitution still calls for active efforts to eliminate the Vargr race, although the interstellar government no longer does.

Gugud (2330): A world that mixes both humans and Vargr, but rigidly restricts them to particular occupational areas. Humans, for instance, pursue careers in medicine, science, engineering, and other highly technical professions. Vargr, on the other hand, have occupations as lawyers, business executives, administrators, and hold jobs in sales and services. Performing a job that belongs to the other race is illegal and strictly enforced.

Hhkar: A large saurian minor race active in Julian affairs. Although they claim a cluster of worlds in Amdukan Sector, their true homeworld is not known. They migrated using slower-than-light

travel. Even today, a large proportion of their population remains in space habitats. The Hhkar are most comfortable in atmospheres tainted with sulfur compounds, and they can adapt to insidious concentrations.

Kengighon (0122): Kengighon is one of the worlds of the sector that still practices slavery. It was known for its harsh and often merciless treatment of the Vargr until the planetary revolt of 1110. The Vargr turned the tables and enslaved the humans, treating them even more brutally. This still generates much controversy over if and how either Gashikan or the Julians should intervene.

Regent: *Regent* is a frequently used title for a head of government among Julian confederations, including the protectorate itself. It came into general use on Asimikigir through new planetary governors awaiting confirmation of their appointment from Hub/Ershur. After the collapse of the Rule of Man, regent was treated as a permanent title. The current regent of the Julian Protectorate is Garin Deidrie Kaarishuu, who was elected to the office in 1112. Her family is one of those that fled the Imperium during the Antares Pacification Campaign and had since intermarried with the Menderes.

Thaeth (2634): Occupied by the Vargr and humans for centuries, both races have kept to their own regions of the world on Thaeth, although they are ruled by the same government. The Vargr areas have developed well and enjoy the full benefit of TL10. Human areas, however, have decayed. Though underdeveloped, they continue to refuse help from the Vargr.

Ueridh (1124): Ueridh is a predominantly Vargr world. The two races coexist harmoniously here, with the humans being nobles and the Vargr a servant class. This relationship has survived since the humans take quite seriously their responsibility in seeing to the well-being of the Vargr. In return, the Vargr have served the humans with loyalty and even a sense of pride. They actively resist those that encourage them to “liberate themselves.”

Wolvesbane, Project: During the –1400s, the Second Empire of Gashikan used geneeering to create a series of microbes exclusively fatal to canines. Difficult to detect and highly infectious, their long incubation time allowed them to spread along the Vargr trade routes. The Empire hoped to wipe out all of the Vargr race when they released the microbes in –1427. However, the Vargr contained their spread, largely through the selfless and often heroic efforts of individuals. Still, the Wolvesbane microbes did break the stalemate in the race wars, and virtually cleared Gashikan Sector of Vargr settlements.

Yileans: The Yileans are a minor human race from Gashikan (Gashikan 2732). They are tall with long features, black hair and “bluish” skin. After the coming of the Vilani, and later the waves of colonists during the Rule of Man, no racially pure Yileans remain on Gashikan. However, Yilean features run strongest among the Gashikan aristocracy.

MEGATRAVELLER

Zuugabish	Gainla	Armi	Mendan
Bammesuka	Kupid	Udinidir	Tozus Ganok
Sarkan	Lumda	Valosak	Kaasam
Ikdaon	Lasla	Maidza	Naem

Mendan Subsector Key

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Mendan Sector

Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data	Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data
0107	C568502-8		Ag Ni		504	Va	G0 VI M3 D	0518	C200796-9		Na Va		900	Ba	F8 V
0110	E244247-6		Lo Ni		333	Na	M8 VI M3 D	0519	D468422-5		Ni		705	Na	M6 V
0111	D868747-1		Ag Ri		302	Na	F5 V M9 D	0521	C7A49AD-A		Fl Hi		500	Sc	K6 D
0113	X646254-3		Lo Ni	R	103	Va	F7 D	0522	B455446-A	F	Ni		701	Sc	K2 D
0121	C785412-8		Ni Co		303	Va	F4 V	0523	A588579-8	J	Ag Ni		522	Sc	F1 D
0122	C30078B-9	C	Na Va	R	921	Va	A1 V K7 D	0531	B362766-6		Ri		124	Va	G2 D
0125	E66A566-5		Ni Wa		604	Va	M3 V	0538	B347004-9	G	Lo Ni		912	Vx	F2 D
0130	E479441-8		Ni		603	Vx	F6 VI	0604	A697302-D		Lo Ni		224	Zu	K1 V M3 D
0131	C440633-7		De Ni Po		525	Vx	F5 D M9 D	0606	C320A51-C		De Hi In Na Po		325	Zu	F6 D M9 D
0136	D444022-7		Lo Ni		812	Vx	F8 V	0609	C336669-8	M	Ni		900	Ba	G3 V
0138	A365545-A	G	Ag Ni		721	Vx	G1 V	0611	B446997-C		Hi In		203	Ba	K0 VI M0 D
0201	C520200-A		De Lo Ni Po		803	Ga	M0 V M0 D M1 D	0614	C510999-9		Hi Na		111	Ba	F7 VI
0202	C66A58B-7	M	Ni Wa		204	Ga	K3 VI	0621	C654357-8	M	Lo Ni		803	Sc	F9 V
0207	E110584-9		Ni		600	Na	M1 V M9 D	0624	E332668-5		Na Ni Po		323	Sc	F5 V
0210	C469010-9	M	Lo Ni		803	Na	F4 V	0628	E67A886-6		Wa		222	Sc	F2 D M7 D
0212	C7BA325-9		Fl Lo Ni Wa		203	Va	M6 III	0632	B534358-8		Lo Ni		101	Va	M1 V
0218	X857220-2		Lo Ni	R	203	Va	F3 D M8 D	0633	D334343-7		Lo Ni		202	Va	M5 V
0221	A59A8AB-9		Wa	A	814	Va	F0 VI Un	0638	B8C5379-A		Fl Lo Ni		104	Va	A8 IV M8 V
0223	C100556-B	H	Ni Va		724	Va	G3 V M1 D	0639	B644958-A		N Hi In		504	Cs	F9 D M5 D
0227	C7B8434-5		Fl Ni		310	Va	K5 V	0702	C38768D-7		Ag Ni Ri C1		203	Zu	F9 V
0229	C537385-6		Lo Ni		222	Vx	G8 V M4 D	0703	A88A663-A	J	Ni Ri Wa Cp		600	Zu	F4 VI
0234	A683200-C	G	Lo Ni		503	Vx	F9 D M1 D	0706	B5757BA-9	M	Ag		603	Zu	K1 VI
0238	C445766-6		Ag		603	Vx	K6 VI	0716	C6887BE-5		Ag		522	Na	F7 D M2 D
0240	C57A257-B		Lo Ni Wa		402	Vx	M7 D M7 D	0718	A562310-B	G	Lo Ni	A	202	Va	F1 D
0305	C8C5454-7	M	Fl Ni		124	Na	M8 VI M7 D	0720	DAB6404-5		Fl Ni		623	Na	G0 V
0308	C663100-8		Lo Ni		614	Na	M0 VI	0724	C547303-5		Lo Ni		500	Sc	G8 V M9 D
0309	C575110-8	M	Lo Ni		822	Na	F0 D	0725	C995426-7	M	Ni		204	Sc	F7 D
0314	C56A7BC-A	M	Wa		200	Ba	F8 D	0726	A459ABG-E		Hi Cp		604	Sc	F2 V
0316	B778795-9	M	Ag		904	Ba	F2 V M5 D	0729	A476343-C		Lo Ni		910	Sc	G4 D M9 D
0317	D557997-6		Hi		300	Ba	M4 D	0731	BA99733-A				923	Na	F5 VI M5 D
0319	B210985-9		Hi Na		304	Ba	M3 D	0732	A520324-C		De Lo Ni Po		822	Va	K0 V M2 D
0320	C310265-A		Lo Ni		104	Na	F9 V	0733	C655541-6	F	Ag Ni		602	Na	F3 V
0325	X658799-0		Ag	A	203	Va	F7 VI	0737	E8CA224-6		Fl Lo Ni Wa		702	Na	F2 V
0326	C562666-6	M	Ni Ri		905	Sc	F9 D M9 D	0739	C562326-7	G	Lo Ni	R	610	Va	G1 V
0328	B69A677-A	M	Ni Wa		203	Sc	M6 V	0802	C320786-8		De Na Po		502	Zu	M9 V
0331	C865457-6		Ni		120	Vx	F0 D	0805	C58A57A-A	M	Ni Wa		104	Zu	K5 D M0 D
0332	C443123-8		Lo Ni Po		222	Vx	F3 V	0806	C687989-9	M	Hi		101	Zu	F1 V
0335	A527667-C		Ni		523	Vx	F2 IV M1 D	0808	B542688-7		Ni Po		303	Va	F5 V
0337	A898520-B		Ag Ni		520	Vx	F0 VI	0811	C1007B9-9		Na Va		703	Ba	M3 V M5 D
0339	C310520-A		Ni		224	Vx	A9 V	0812	C200635-9		Na Ni Va		220	Ba	M8 V
0340	C310784-9		Na		800	Vx	M0 VI M8 D	0814	C447133-8		Lo Ni		804	Va	F7 D
0402	C434988-9		Hi In		324	Zu	F0 V	0815	X447005-3		Lo Ni An	R	211	Va	F1 D M5 D
0403	B8CA699-B	M	Fl Ni Wa		113	Zu	M2 V	0826	B7B7797-A	M	Fl		805	Sc	M6 V M6 D
0408	X887374-0		Lo Ni	R	805	Va	M6 D	0833	C9D88BC-7	C	Fl	A	703	Va	F3 D M6 D
0411	E16069E-7		De Ni Ri		504	Ba	F2 V	0839	E424102-7		Lo Ni		704	Va	F0 Ib M7 D
0419	X99A630-3	C	Ni Wa	R	124	Va	K2 V	0840	C89A986-A		Hi In Wa		803	Va	M2 D
0421	C5A635A-A		Fl Lo Ni		103	Sc	A1 V M9 V	0903	CA66722-3		Ag		405	Zu	F5 D
0426	E99A654-8		Ni Wa		410	Sc	F9 V M8 D	0908	C510368-9		Lo Ni		704	Na	M1 V
0433	A89A88B-B		Wa Cp		400	Vx	F5 V	0909	A57527A-C		Lo Ni		223	Na	F4 D
0434	B000310-9		As Lo Ni		111	Vx	M1 V	0911	C776431-7	M	Ni		504	Na	G7 V M7 D
0436	B000240-B	G	As Lo Ni		824	Vx	G2 V	0913	C3657BC-6	M	Ag		303	Na	F9 D
0438	C455488-8		Ni		104	Vx	K3 D	0914	C564696-6	M	Ag Ni Ri		702	Na	F0 D M2 D
0439	C673241-4		Lo Ni		204	Vx	F1 D M7 D	0917	C599255-9	M	Lo Ni		904	Na	G9 V
0440	E321976-5	C	Hi In Na Po		423	Vx	G6 D	0919	B9D8775-8		Fl		404	Va	F7 III M3 D
0502	C300530-9	M	Ni Va		800	Zu	M9 V	0920	C8575AB-8	C	Ag Ni	A	421	Va	F4 V
0505	X79A47A-3		Ni Wa	R	403	Zu	G7 V M0 D	0923	A697440-A	J	Ni		222	Sc	F5 VI M7 D
0508	C58A642-7		Ni Ri Wa		311	Zu	F8 VI	0928	B658200-8	M	Lo Ni		725	Sc	F7 D
0509	X587554-3		Ag Ni	R	404	Va	F9 D	0930	C7548DE-1				313	Sc	K2 VI
0510	C777A7C-B	M	Hi In		400	Ba	F2 VI M8 D	0932	C62558C-8	G	Ni	R	404	Va	M9 V
0512	C100455-B		Ni Va		804	Ba	F3 V	0933	CA9699A-5		Hi In	R	403	Va	M1 D
0514	A974752-C	J	Ag Cp		705	Ba	F4 D M8 D	0938	B833558-B	G	Ni Po	R	103	Va	M0 V
0515	A000624-D		As Na Ni		222	Ba	M6 V	0939	C642434-6		Ni Po		324	Va	F0 D
0516	A67A541-A	J	Ni Wa		222	Ba	F9 D	1005	C553473-4		Ni Po		911	Va	F6 D M2 D

Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data	Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data
1008	C356340-6		Lo Ni		402	Na	F6 D	1534	B520034-9		De Lo Ni Po		822	Jp	M8 III M0 V
1011	B120634-8		De Na Ni PoD4		103	Na	M9 V	1536	E324430-4		Ni		503	Jp	G4 V
1012	E774433-4		Ni		804	Va	F5 V M2 D	1538	C400301-7	J	Lo Ni Va		524	Jp	M2 V M3 D
1024	C130620-9	M	De Na Ni Po		422	J-	G7 V	1539	B00058D-9	F	As Ni		623	Jp	K8 III M3 D M9 VI
1029	D33467A-6		Ni	A	104	Va	F4 V M9 D	1601	C310100-B	M	Lo Ni		304	Na	K1 V
1035	E641877-4		Po		801	Va	F0 VI	1602	B76A445-A	M	Ni Wa	A	903	Na	M1 V M4 D
1038	C8A8242-5	C	Fl Lo Ni		202	Va	M4 V	1605	B6B2966-A	J	Fl Hi Cp		423	Jm	F3 V
1040	B321776-9		Na Po		501	J-	M0 II	1613	B368456-C	M	Ni		903	Jm	F9 D
1103	C786104-8		Lo Ni		900	Na	F6 V	1615	C130100-B		De Lo Ni Po		523	Jm	F9 V
1105	AA8A379-D		Lo Ni Wa		802	Na	F4 V	1617	E647577-4		Ag Ni		701	Jm	F8 D M2 D
1108	A20067A-A	F	Na Ni Va		603	Na	M2 D	1619	D69A534-6		Ni Wa		104	J-	F6 V M6 D
1113	C72547B-6	M	Ni		202	Na	M0 V	1621	CA66365-4	F	Lo Ni	A	534	Jv	F4 D
1116	C200365-8	M	Lo Ni Va		702	Na	G7 V	1626	C8B4441-6		Fl Ni		204	J-	M0 V M4 D
1118	D450244-6		De Lo Ni Po		412	Na	F9 D	1632	C532743-6		Na Po		804	Jp	G0 VI
1119	D449226-6		Lo Ni		925	J-	F0 D M6 D M4 D	1633	A7A2646-9		Fl Ni		101	Jp	M5 VI
1122	D753410-5		Ni Po		802	J-	G1 VI	1634	A532ABA-E		Hi In Na Po Cp		902	Jp	B1 III M1 D
1124	C32276B-8		Na Po		103	J-	M8 V M0 D	1635	C566558-8		Ag Ni		220	Jp	G8 D
1126	B368002-9	J	Lo Ni	R	104	J-	F6 V	1640	C574974-9	J	Hi In		624	J-	F0 D
1127	D200276-8		Lo Ni Va		524	J-	K0 V M7 D	1704	C756402-5	M	Ni		200	Na	K3 D
1139	D688ADD-3		Hi C1	A	611	J-	F4 D M6 D	1708	C57A457-A		Ni Wa		203	Jm	G1 D
1140	C7359B6-8	M	Hi In		422	J-	M1 D M5 D	1710	B446587-A	F	Ag Ni		800	Jm	F1 D M1 D
1202	C767641-5	M	Ag Ni Ri		903	Na	M0 D	1726	E498843-3				400	J-	F2 D M2 D
1208	C221763-6	M	Na Po		924	Na	M5 V	1728	E355773-4		Ag		604	Ja	F3 V
1211	BADA554-A	G	Fl Ni Wa		703	Va	K5 D M8 D M1 D	1729	E799100-6		Lo Ni		604	Ja	K3 V
1218	DAB9686-5		Fl Ni	R	734	J-	F5 VI M5 D	1732	A8439BE-C		Hi In Po		402	Jp	F6 D
1220	C100499-7		Ni Va	R	722	J-	M5 V	1733	B588796-9		Ag Ri		902	Jp	F2 V
1221	C100230-7		Lo Ni Va		300	J-	M8 V	1738	C687778-5		Ag Ri		703	Jp	F2 VI M8 D M0 D
1224	C773731-6				105	J-	K6 D M0 D M5 D	1740	C654425-5	M	Ni		900	J-	F1 V M0 D
1226	EAD7673-5		Fl Ni		602	J-	G4 III M1 V	1801	B6227CA-A	M	Na Po		203	Jm	M4 V
1231	C0006A8-9		As Na Ni		324	Na	M5 V	1804	B78A337-A	F	Lo Ni Wa		401	Jm	F6 D
1237	C333250-7	M	Lo Ni Po		602	J-	M5 V	1810	C520241-9	M	De Lo Ni Po		804	Jm	F1 V
1238	B478734-8		Ag D1 Rs	M	404	J-	F7 V M4 D	1811	C465200-7		Lo Ni		212	Jm	F0 D
1302	C66A699-6		Ni Ri Wa		803	Na	G9 VI	1815	C575310-7	M	Lo Ni		404	Jm	F9 D M7 D
1303	C425104-9	M	Lo Ni		725	Na	G6 V M5 D	1818	D253545-6		Ni Po		323	J-	F1 V
1306	B574442-8	J	Ni		903	Na	F4 D	1820	C997769-4	M	Ag		825	Jv	M2 D
1310	B237013-9	M	Lo Ni		900	Na	K3 V	1821	C59A768-6	J	Wa		210	Jv	F4 D M6 D
1313	B583541-A		Ni		603	Na	F9 D	1822	B533776-8	F	Na Po Cp	A	403	Jv	M3 V
1315	A530363-C		De Lo Ni Po		904	Jm	F7 V	1823	C656765-7		Ag		610	Jv	G6 VI M6 D
1316	A99A978-C	J	Hi In Wa Cp		422	Jm	F9 VI	1827	A98569E-B		Ag Ni Ri		601	Ja	F2 V
1317	B888449-7	M	Ni		534	Jm	G0 VI M7 D	1832	DAFA202-6		Fl Lo Ni Wa		221	Jp	M2 V
1320	C000212-7	J	As Lo Ni		810	J-	M9 V M0 D	1836	C120578-7	F	De Ni Po		712	Jp	F1 V M3 D
1321	D57A89C-7		Wa	R	103	J-	F3 V	1839	C556698-6	M	Ag Ni		904	J-	M4 V M7 D
1324	C69A6AA-5		Ni Wa	A	421	J-	F0 VI	1901	A8767B8-B		Ag Cp		900	Jm	F6 V M8 D
1327	E566446-4		Ni		200	J-	F3 D	1906	C423554-8		Ni Po	R	104	Jm	K9 V
1329	A400976-C		Hi Na Va Cp		104	Jd	F9 VI M0 D	1910	E878131-6		Lo Ni		711	Jm	F5 D M2 D
1335	C654664-7		Ag Ni		923	Jp	G6 V	1911	B78A496-8		Ni Wa		204	Jm	F8 D
1336	C410100-8		Lo Ni		125	Jp	M4 V	1913	C346450-9		Ni		510	Jm	F0 VI
1337	A200520-C	J	Ni Va		400	Jp	G4 V	1915	B000678-B		As Na Ni Cp		322	Jm	M2 V
1338	C575976-8	M	Hi In		304	Jp	F3 D M2 D	1917	C543742-5	M	Po		502	Jm	K1 V
1340	C678526-7	J	Ag Ni	A	104	J-	K2 V M8 D	1919	E443763-6		Po		120	J-	F4 V
1404	B443777-A	J	Po		220	Na	F9 D M2 D	1924	C535267-5		Lo Ni	A	301	Jv	F5 V M2 D
1407	E300204-8		Lo Ni Va		702	Na	M0 V M1 D	1933	E53079B-6		De Na Po	R	124	Jp	M7 V
1409	D748641-4		Ag Ni		224	Na	M3 D M7 D M0 D	1936	B5578BD-8			A	810	Jp	F4 VI M1 D
1411	B7CA131-9	M	Fl Lo Ni Wa		702	Na	K4 V	1938	C468764-5		Ag Ri		825	J-	F6 VI
1417	B200411-B	J	Ni Va		303	Jm	M8 V M6 D	1939	C7577CB-7		Ag	A	603	J-	F1 V
1430	B226832-A	J			313	Jd	F1 V M0 D	2005	CAB6422-8		Fl Ni		722	Jm	M4 V
1431	E763531-4		Ni		904	Jd	F9 V	2008	C642131-8		Lo Ni Po		303	Jm	F4 VI M7 D
1435	E673742-4				623	Jp	M5 V M4 D	2016	C666875-5		Ri		224	Jm	F0 V M1 D M2 D
1436	E4209BC-9		De Hi In Na Po		523	Jp	F3 V	2020	E575AAA-9		Hi In	R	402	J-	F4 D
1513	B969010-9		Lo Ni		704	Jm	F7 VI M6 D	2025	E6AA325-6		Fl Lo Ni Wa		502	J-	M5 V
1517	C7AA653-7		Fl Ni Wa	R	904	Jm	M8 V M5 D	2028	C8AA233-9		Fl Lo Ni Wa		304	Ja	M1 V M8 D
1518	C9D87CC-5	M	Fl	A	304	J-	K3 V M8 D	2029	B530799-6		De Na Po		124	Ja	M4 V M0 D
1520	B300645-9		Na Ni Va		901	J-	M5 II	2030	D772435-6		Ni	A	103	Ja	F7 VI
1525	E77A498-7		Ni Wa		402	J-	F6 V M1 D	2031	C433586-8	J	Ni Po		101	J-	M4 V
1527	C567330-4		Lo Ni		803	J-	F0 D M0 D	2032	DAA7231-5		Fl Lo Ni		635	J-	M3 V

Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data	Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data
2036	C587200-5		Lo Ni		525	Jp	F8 V	2520	X622864-1		Na Po	R	600	Ja	F6 D
2101	D5898B9-5				721	Jm	F9 VI M2 D	2521	C326368-9	M	Lo Ni	A	410	Ja	M0 V
2103	B300545-A	Ni	Va		504	Jm	M5 V	2523	C784595-7	M	Ag Ni		424	Ja	G7 D
2105	C624324-7	M	Lo Ni		304	Jm	M2 V	2527	C442748-7		Po		700	Ja	F1 V
2106	E437588-6		Ni		602	Jm	M9 V	2530	D301345-9		lc Lo Ni Va		700	Ja	M8 VI M6 D
2107	C434022-8		Lo Ni		822	Jm	F0 V M2 D	2534	C410444-6		Ni		804	Ju	A4 V
2110	E675424-3		Ni		404	Jm	F5 D	2535	D8DA897-5		Fl Wa		602	Ju	F0 D
2111	C6A4330-9		Fl Lo Ni		221	Jm	M2 II	2539	C230415-A	M	De Ni Po		203	Ju	M0 V
2113	E400456-8		Ni Va		802	Jm	M0 V M2 D	2540	C778111-8		Lo Ni		134	J-	F9 V
2114	E48A675-5		Ni Ri Wa		903	Jm	G4 V M4 D	2612	B773644-7		Ni		703	Jm	F9 V
2123	C5A2545-9		Fl Ni		203	J-	F9 IV M2 D	2615	B65A988-9	F	Hi Wa Cp		403	Jm	F1 V M3 D
2125	E7549AC-7		Hi	A	102	J-	F3 D	2616	C453657-6	M	Ni Po		920	Jm	F5 D M9 D
2128	B244216-7	J	Lo Ni		305	Ja	F6 D M6 D	2617	C8BA888-6	J	Fl Wa	R	202	Jm	F5 D M5 D
2131	D3236AE-6		Na Ni Po	R	322	Ja	K4 V	2619	C378310-5		Lo Ni		414	Ja	F6 V
2135	CA75653-4		Ag Ni		604	J-	F0 D	2620	C78A378-8		Lo Ni Wa		703	Ja	F8 D
2201	E58A667-5		Ni Ri Wa		200	Jm	K0 VI M9 D	2622	C422789-8		Na Po	R	423	Ja	M5 V
2210	B6348B9-7	F			334	Jm	G5 D	2624	B989A9C-C	M	Hi		624	Ja	F4 V M2 D
2213	E599335-3		Lo Ni		225	Jm	F1 D	2626	C221468-A		Ni Po	A	704	Ja	M9 III
2215	E644599-6		Ag Ni		624	Jm	F9 D M2 D	2627	B200648-B		Na Ni Va		820	Ja	M5 V M4 D
2216	C897597-5		Ag Ni		611	Jm	F4 V M0 D	2628	C5218CA-5		Na Po		701	Ja	F8 D
2221	C33158C-7		Ni Po	A	302	J-	M1 V M3 D	2629	C678452-7	M	Ni		310	Ja	G1 D M6 D M6 D
2222	E552640-5		Ni Po		804	J-	M4 V M7 D	2632	C576477-5		Ni	R	513	Ju	F4 D
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2237	C753400-5	M	Ni Po		503	J-	F7 D M0 D	2705	A857414-9	M	Ni		824	Jm	F8 D
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2312	C338443-6	F	Ni		403	Jm	M7 D	2709	E64778B-4		Ag		400	Jm	K3 D M6 D
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2319	C89A647-8	M	Ni Wa		504	J-	F2 D M3 D	2715	B9BA320-9		Fl Lo Ni Wa		304	Jm	F8 V M9 D
2323	C330972-7	J	De Hi In Na Po		222	Ja	F3 V	2716	D9AA565-9		Fl Ni Wa		413	Jm	M5 III M8 D
2324	D222356-7	J	Lo Ni Po		404	Ja	M7 II	2719	C9A7342-7	M	Fl Lo Ni		500	Ja	F1 V
2325	C875512-7		Ag Ni		303	Ja	F0 VI	2721	C5568A9-5	M			922	Ja	F0 D
2326	C57A269-A		Lo Ni Wa		300	Ja	F5 D	2723	A566668-7		Ag Ni Ri		104	Ja	F3 V
2327	B300533-C	M	Ni Va		113	Ja	K4 V	2725	C558001-8		Lo Ni		204	Ja	F6 V
2329	A220527-B		De Ni Po		923	Ja	M9 V	2726	B534116-9		Lo Ni		110	Ja	F3 V M0 D
2330	E6638AE-5				202	Ja	F8 D M3 D	2734	C230472-6	F	De Ni Po		823	Ju	M4 V
2331	C300001-8	M	Lo Ni Va		801	Ja	B2 IV	2737	C477987-9		Hi In		403	Ju	F5 V
2334	C469011-8		Lo Ni		234	Ju	G0 D	2740	C300778-9	M	Na Va		922	J-	F2 V M2 D
2339	C784586-6	M	Ag Ni		423	Ju	F4 V M3 D	2801	C857545-7		Ag Ni		505	Jm	F4 D
2340	B452587-8	J	Ni Po C1		123	J-	F3 D M6 D	2803	B200899-9	J	Na Va		223	Jm	K3 D
2402	X365662-0		Ag Ni Ri	R	803	Jm	G7 D	2809	A38689A-C		Ri		104	Jm	K3 V
2405	A899389-9		Lo Ni		223	Jm	F4 V	2813	E423ABD-7		Hi In Na Po	A	405	Jm	F5 V
2408	B457243-A		Lo Ni		603	Jm	F3 V	2814	B655322-6	J	Lo Ni		223	Jm	F1 D
2416	E654421-2		Ni		921	Jm	G9 V M3 D	2815	B468798-8	F	Ag Ri		804	Jm	K6 V M0 D
2419	C985422-8	M	Ni C2		403	J-	M1 V M5 D	2818	C776997-8	M	Hi In		324	Ja	F9 V M7 D
2420	B655338-9		Lo Ni		122	Ja	K3 D	2819	D8B3323-3	J	Fl Lo Ni		501	Ja	K1 VI
2421	C420000-8		Ba De Lo Ni Po		003	Ja	M1 V	2822	D556898-2	R			311	Ja	F3 D
2422	B695432-A	J	Ni		120	Ja	F6 V	2823	C763103-8		Lo Ni		904	Ja	F0 V M7 D
2423	C387343-5	M	Lo Ni		904	Ja	F7 D M4 D	2824	C100764-9	M	Na Va		403	Ja	M3 V
2424	B547698-9	M	Ag Ni		104	Ja	G7 VI	2825	D5307A7-5		De Na Po		604	Ja	M7 V
2425	B577666-7		Ag Ni		400	Ja	M8 V M6 D	2835	B78A323-B	F	Lo Ni Wa		912	Ju	F6 V
2429	A863220-9	J	Lo Ni		823	Ja	G2 VI	2836	C110678-9	J	Na Ni	R	905	Ju	M0 V
2433	C9EA205-A		Fl Lo Ni Wa		123	Ju	G0 V	2837	C542444-6		Ni Po		321	Ju	F2 D M3 D
2435	A79A658-C	J	Ni Wa Cp		724	Ju	F7 D	2902	B468651-A	J	Ag Ni Ri		734	Jm	F4 D
2437	C241401-6		Ni Po		403	Ju	G2 D	2903	C9AA485-B		Fl Ni Wa		602	Jm	M6 V M4 D M1 D
2438	C598562-5		Ag Ni		323	Ju	F8 V M6 D	2904	C267887-8	M	Ri		324	Jm	F1 D M5 D
2502	C11066B-9	M	Na Ni		101	Jm	M9 V M7 D	2909	A768988-E	J	Hi Cp		332	Jm	G2 V
2506	C7898A9-7				302	Jm	F6 D	2913	C955589-4	M	Ag Ni		804	Jm	F7 V M3 D
2510	B477221-B		Lo Ni		323	Jm	F8 D	2916	C323433-6		Ni Po		712	J-	M8 V M8 D
2511	C464430-9	J	Ni		604	Jm	F3 D M0 D	2917	C8A357C-9	M	Fl Ni	A	723	J-	K0 V
2512	E6318AB-5		Na Po	A	102	Jm	F9 D M8 D	2918	A543330-A		Lo Ni Po		813	J-	G5 V M3 D

Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data
2922	A4439A9-E	F	Hi In Po Cp	222	Ja	K5 V	
2924	C320775-7	M	De Na Po	500	Ja	G0 V M9 D	
2926	E463410-4		Ni	604	Ja	M0 VI M3 D	
2927	C896551-5	M	Ag Ni	704	Ja	F8 V	
2928	C656141-8		Lo Ni	824	Ja	G6 V	
2929	D4576A9-5		Ag Ni	223	Ja	F2 V M0 D	
2933	C89A348-A		Lo Ni Wa	504	Ju	G6 V M0 D	
2940	C210763-9	J	Na	720	Jr	M8 V	
3001	C621478-7		Ni Po	703	Jm	M0 V M4 D	
3004	C789866-7	M	Ri	735	Jm	F5 VI	
3005	A57A356-B		Lo Ni Wa	705	Jm	F3 V	
3006	C4259A9-8	M	Hi In	712	Jm	F5 V M7 D	
3007	C345663-4		Ag Ni	724	Jm	F4 D M4 D	
3009	C863441-8		Ni	804	Jm	F2 D M2 D M5 D	
3010	B97A403-C	M	Ni Wa	924	Jm	G2 D	
3011	C400446-7	J	Ni Va	R 122	Jm	M8 V M0 D	
3012	C355101-8		Lo Ni	123	Jm	F5 D	
3013	C734444-8	J	Ni	720	Jm	M7 V M1 D	
3016	C465731-7	M	Ag	500	J-	K7 V	
3018	C300200-9		Lo Ni Va	620	Ja	M0 V	
3023	C98585A-9	M	Ri	800	Ja	F7 D	
3025	B320737-A		De Na Po	710	Ja	K7 V	
3026	C388587-6	M	Ag Ni	523	Ja	M2 V	
3028	C322455-B	F	Ni Po	422	Ja	M6 VI	
3029	B776611-6	M	Ag Ni	502	Ja	F5 D M0 D	
3032	E2458B9-6			A 900	J-	G5 V	
3038	C578536-4	M	Ag Ni	822	Jr	F8 VI	
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3115	E676100-6		Lo Ni	305	J-	F5 D M7 D	
3117	C330785-7	F	De Na Po	303	J-	M3 D	
3119	B310A88-D		Hi Na	103	Ja	F1 V M8 D	

Hex	UWP	B	Remarks	Z	Data	All	Stellar Data
3122	A67A233-D		Lo Ni Wa	524	Ja	G6 V M6 D	
3123	E754352-5		Lo Ni	305	Ja	F2 VI M9 D	
3124	B525758-7	J		803	Ja	G5 V	
3126	C766345-6		Lo Ni	522	Ja	F6 VI M1 D	
3129	D9D9866-5		Fi	524	Ja	F7 V M9 D	
3136	C59A310-8		Lo Ni Wa	134	Jr	G9 VI	
3203	C999200-8	J	Lo Ni	920	J-	F5 V	
3204	A678200-A	F	Lo Ni	924	J-	F9 VI	
3205	C4109AB-9		Hi Na	922	J-	F2 D	
3206	B000531-9	M	As Ni	113	J-	M8 D	
3208	C21087C-9	M	Na	901	J-	F5 D M4 D M5 D	
3216	A655312-9		Lo Ni	323	J-	M1 D M5 D	
3219	C777547-5		Ag Ni	200	Ja	F3 VI	
3220	D69A689-7		Ni Wa	704	Ja	F2 D	
3221	B621662-8	J	Na Ni Po	922	Ja	M0 V	
3225	C459777-5	F		223	Ja	F8 V	
3228	E7A6111-6		Fi Lo Ni	703	Ja	F8 V M8 D	
3230	B677755-7		Ag	103	Ja	F0 D M2 D	
3233	B787523-A	F	Ag Ni	222	Jr	F3 D M1 D	
3234	C867358-7	M	Lo Ni	104	Jr	M5 V	
3236	B58A667-B	J	Ni Ri Wa Cp	302	Jr	G7 VI M4 D	
3239	B969014-9	M	Lo Ni	204	Jr	G7 V	

Amdukan Sector

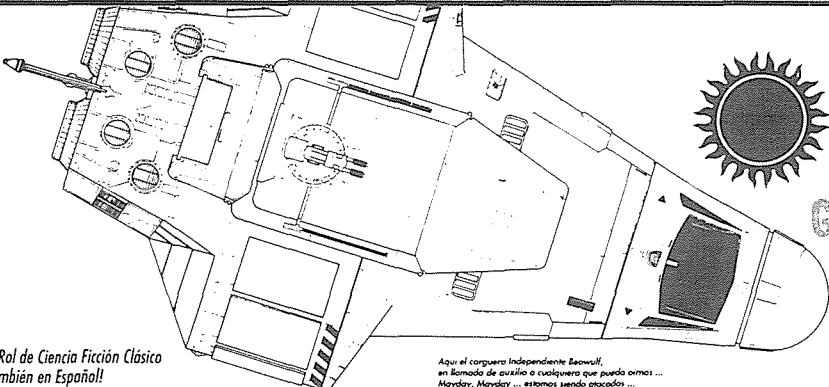
0223 A684A87-E F Hi Cx 300 Ja F4 VI M9 D

Gashikan Sector

2732 A98599B-D J Hi Cx 522 Ga M6 III K0 IV

Abbreviations Cs: Client State (Imperium) Ba: Confederation of Bammesuka Ga: Third Empire of Gashikan J-: Independent (Julian Protectorate) Ja: Asimikigir Confederation Jd: Lumda Dower Jm: Commonwealth of Mendan Jp: Pirbarish Starlane Jr: Rukadukaz Republic Ju: Ukhanzi Coordinate Jv: Vugurar Dominion Na: Nonaligned (human) Sc: Sarkan Constellation Va: Vargr Vx: Antares Pact Zu: Zuugabish Tripartite.

Subsectors: A: Zuugabish B: Gainla C: Armi D: Mendan E: Bammesuka F: Kupid G: Udindir H: Tozus Ganok I: Sarkan J: Lumda K: Valosak L: Kaasam M: Ikdaion N: Lasla O: Maidza P: Naem.



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Traveller

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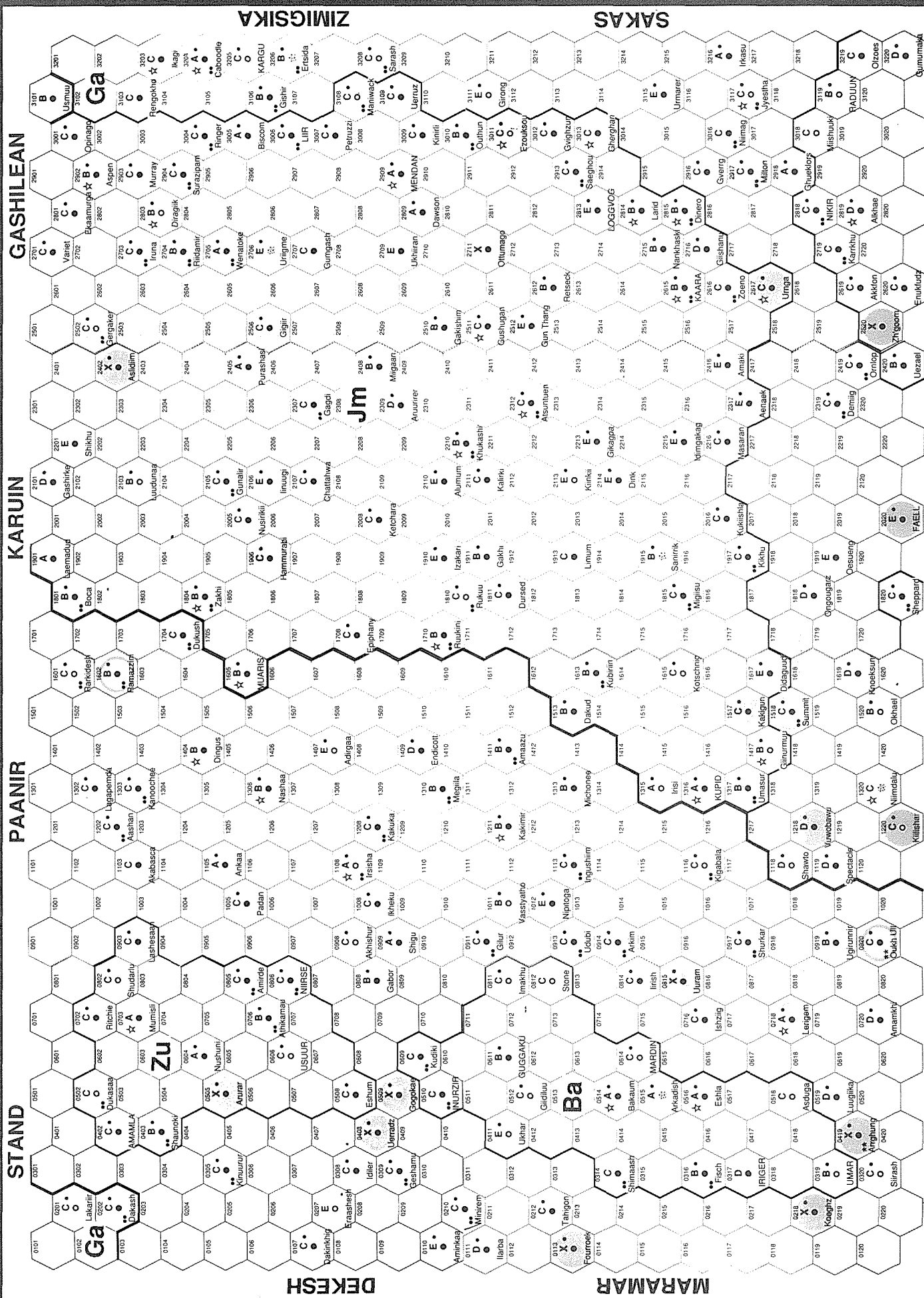
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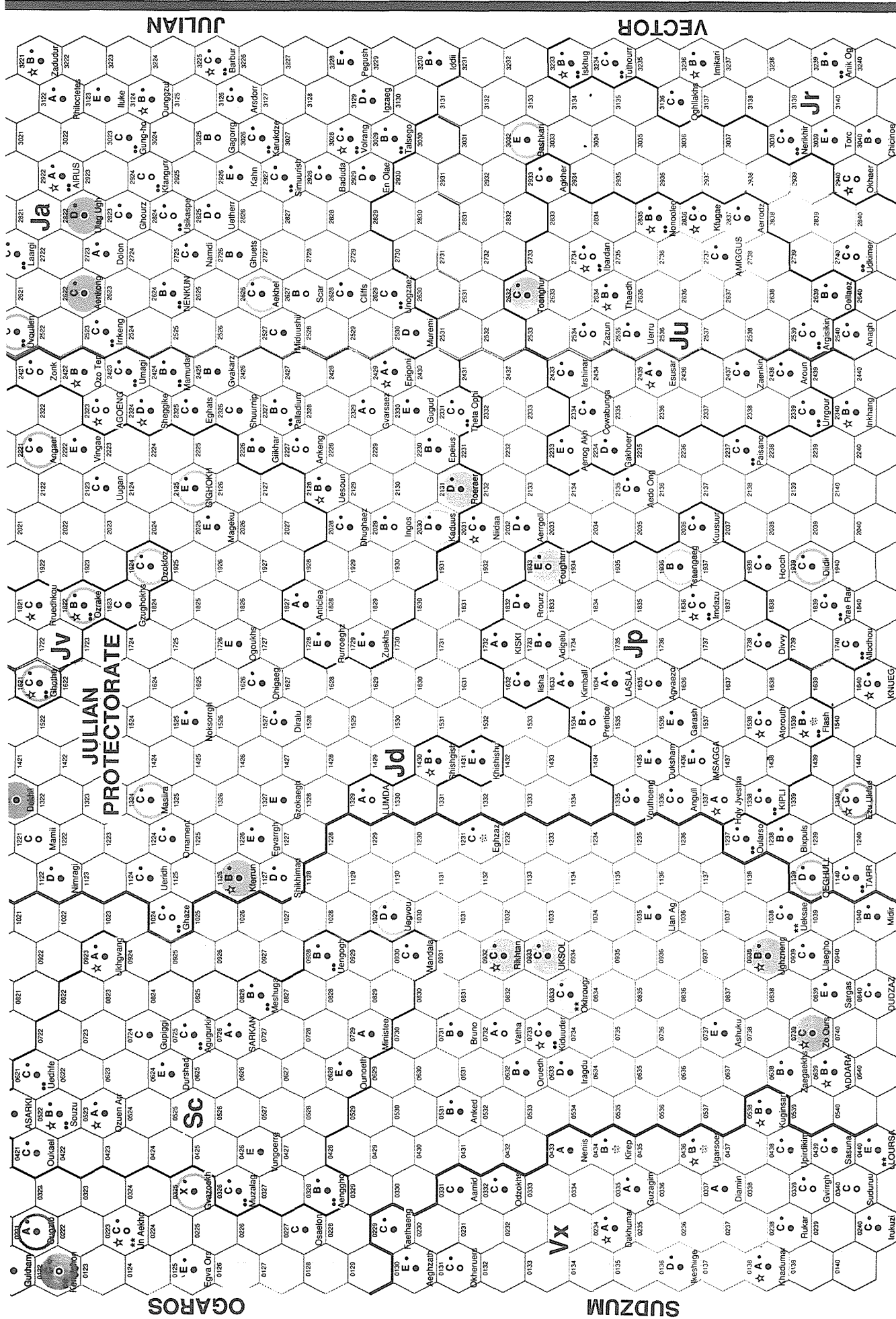
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Circa 1120





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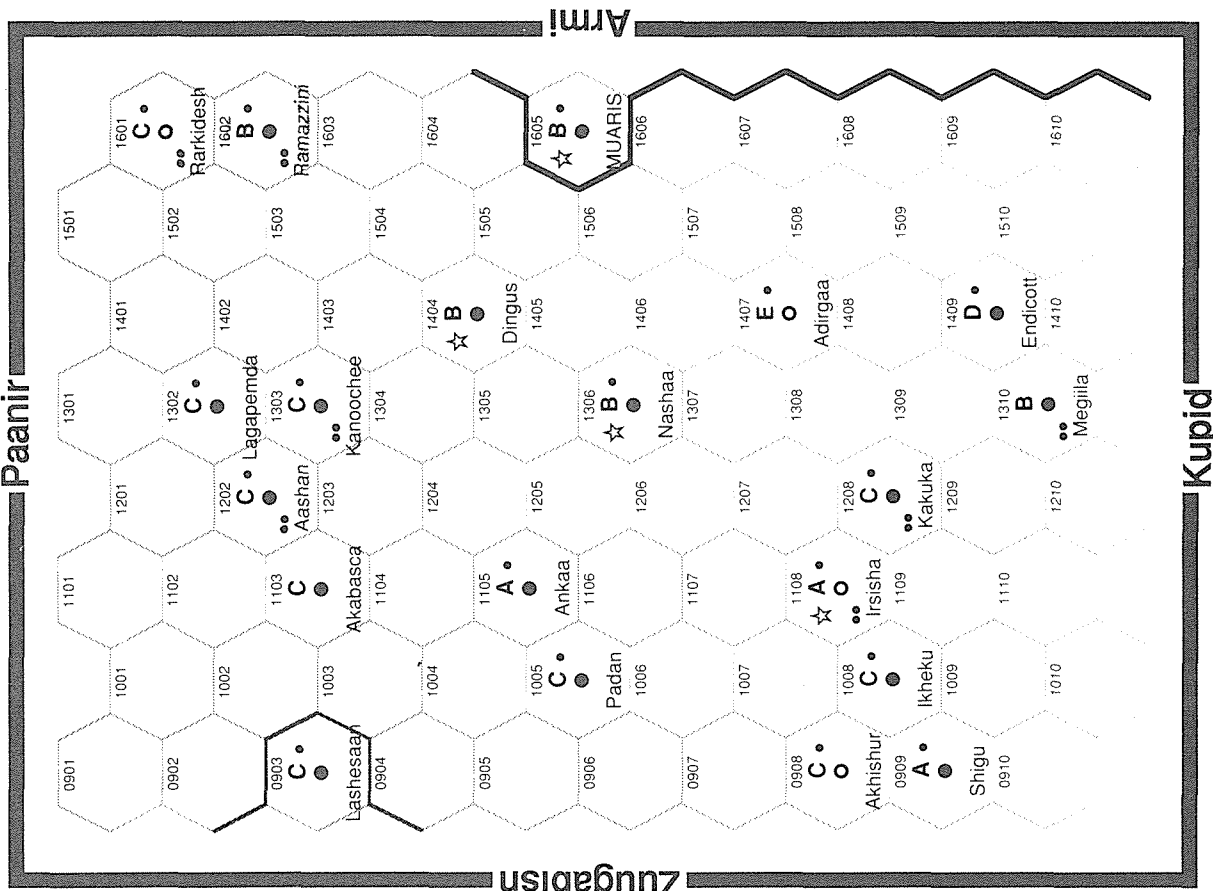
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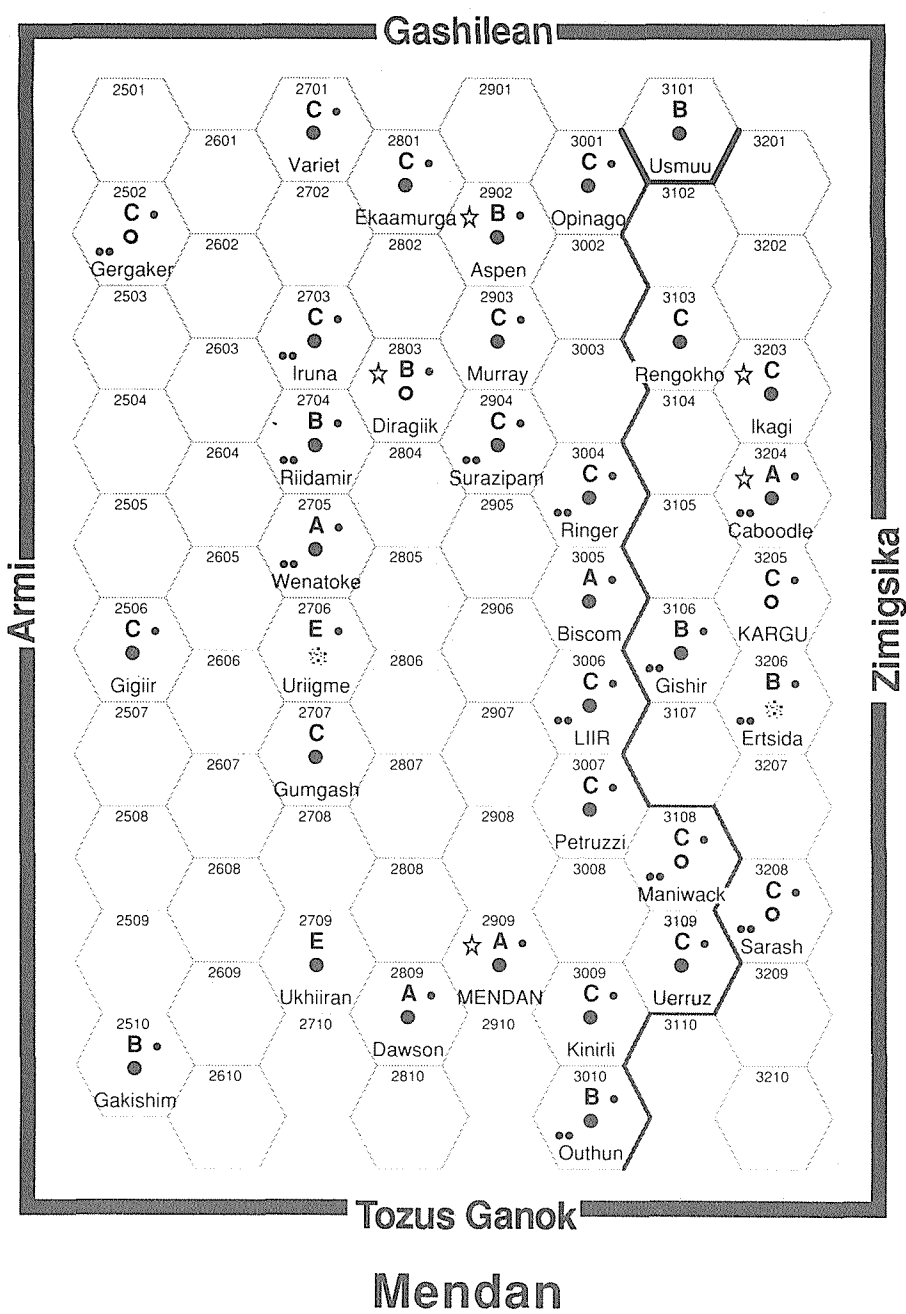
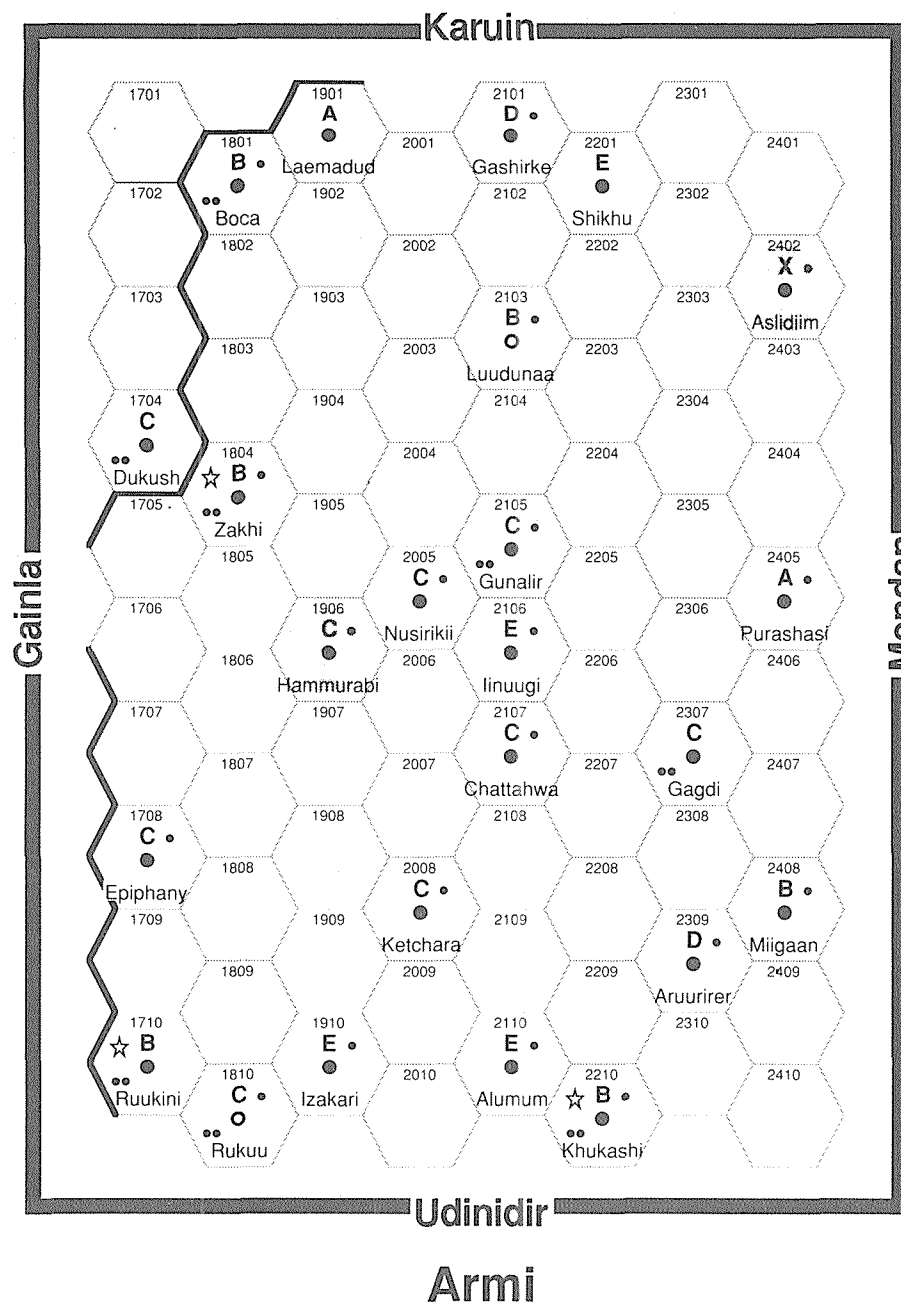
PELUSIUM

(Showing boundary data pertaining to the Julian Protectorate.)

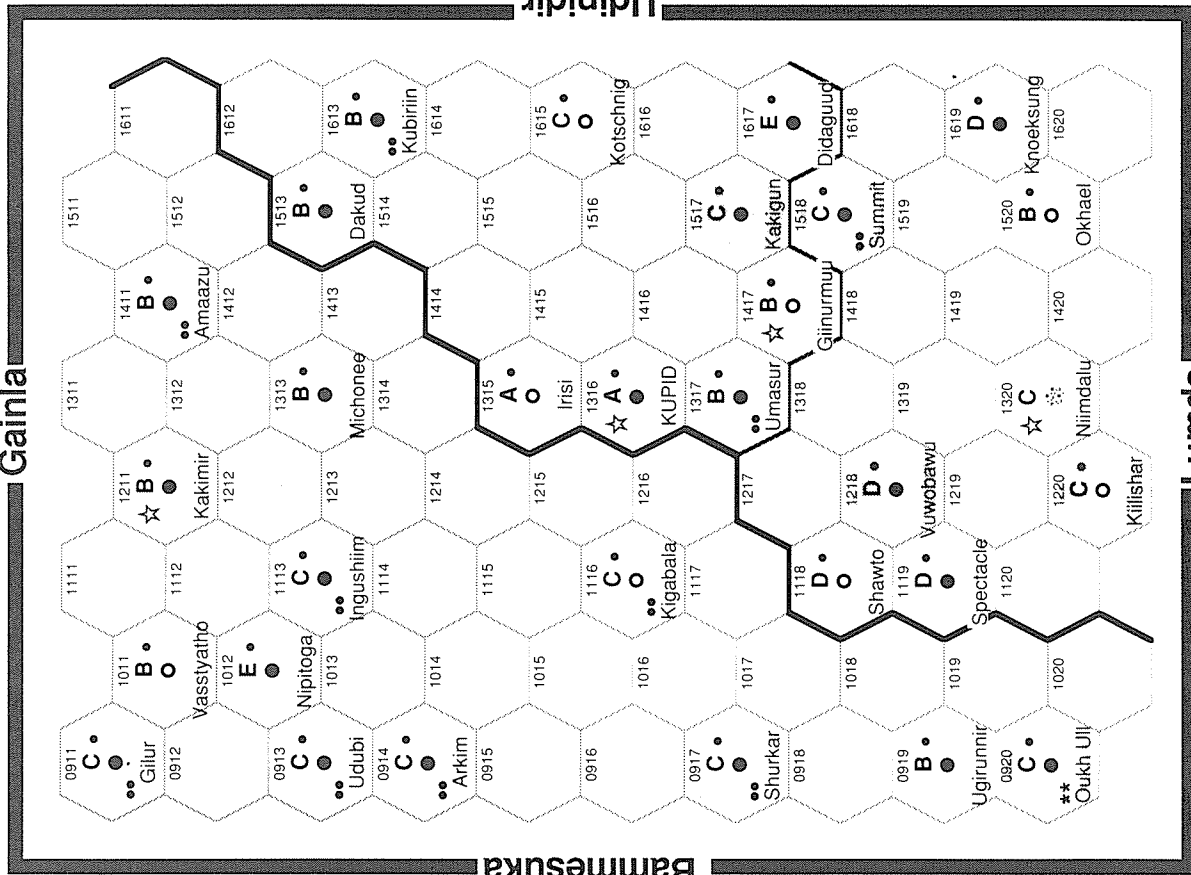
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Paanir

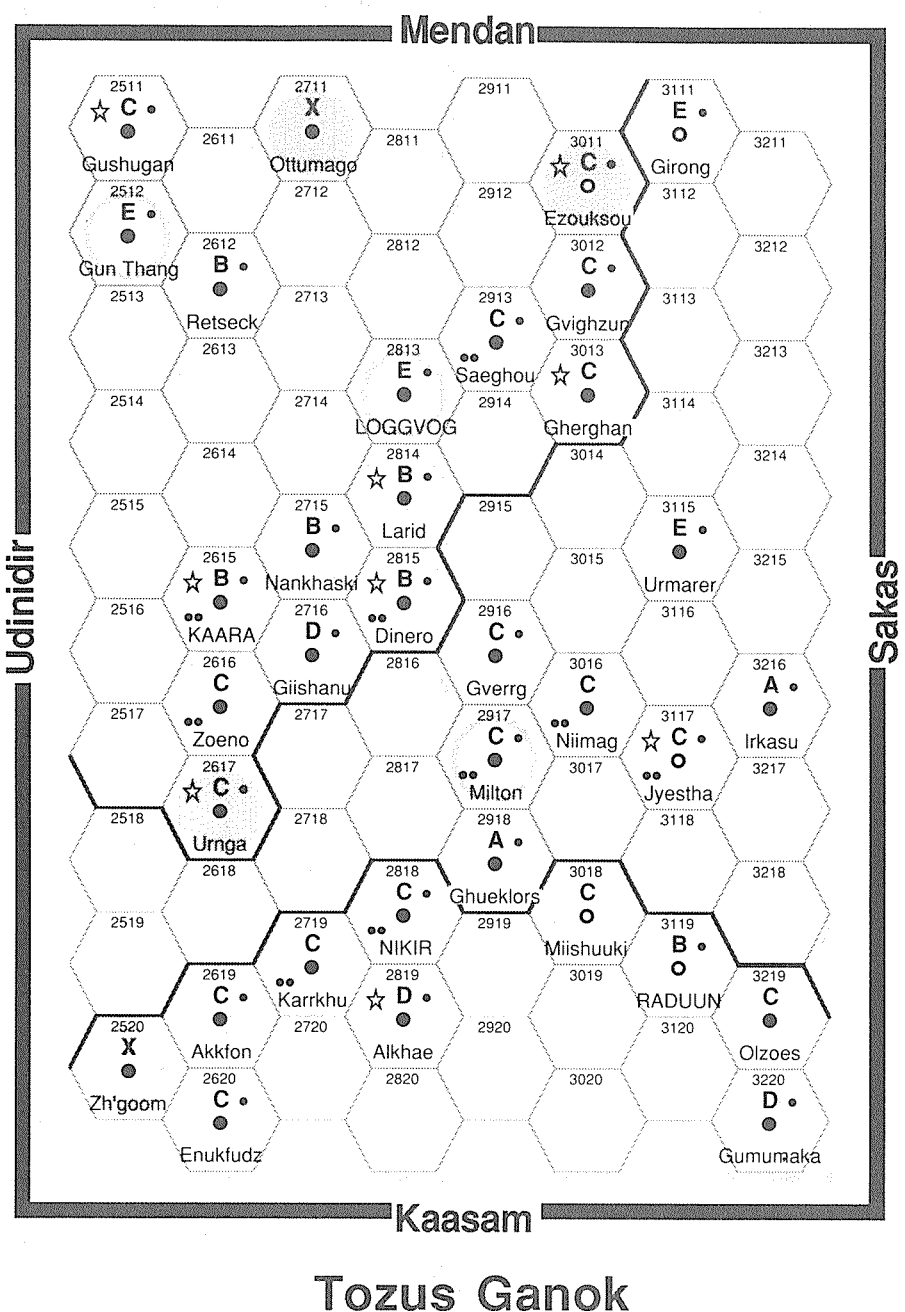
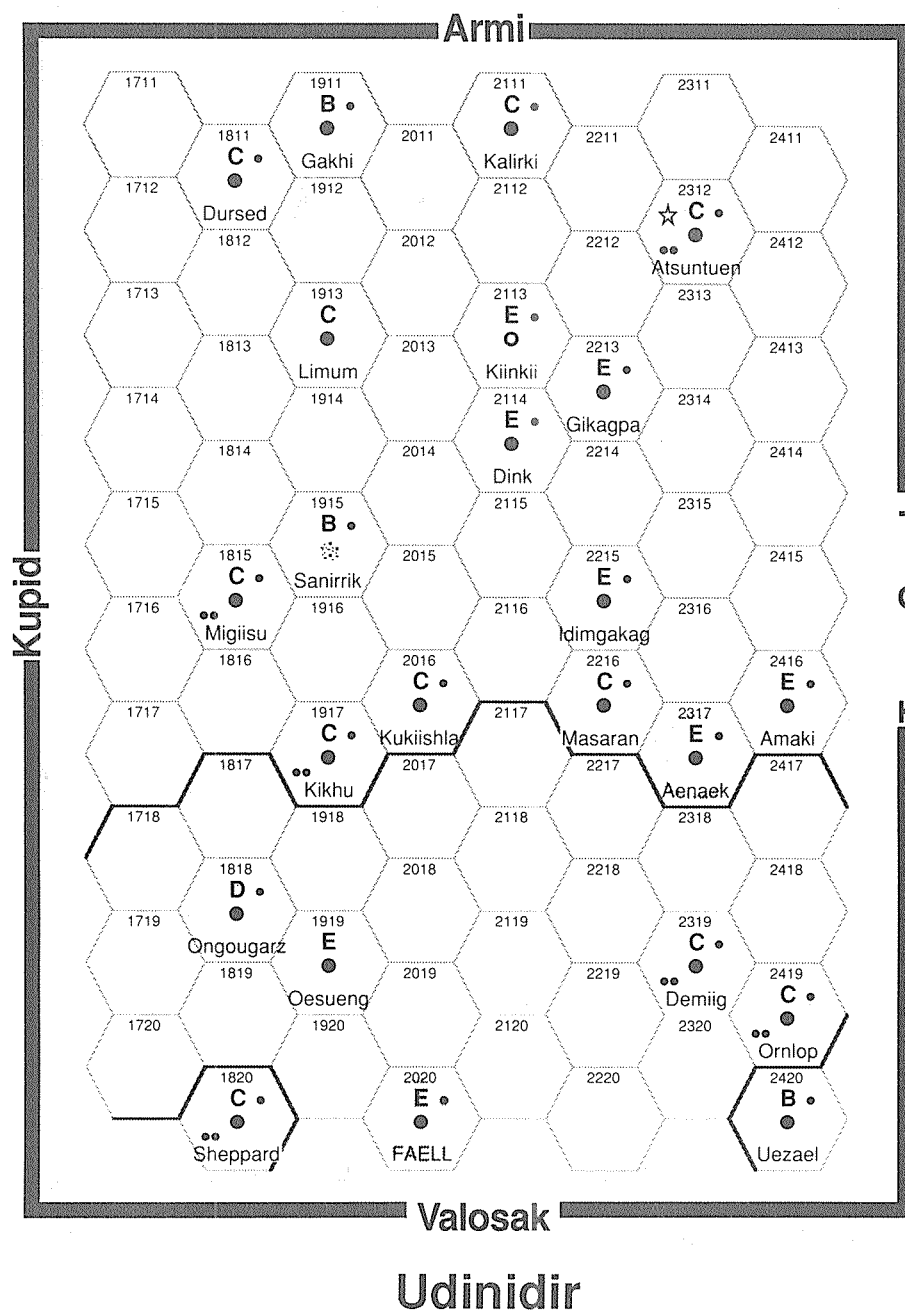




2005



Lunda

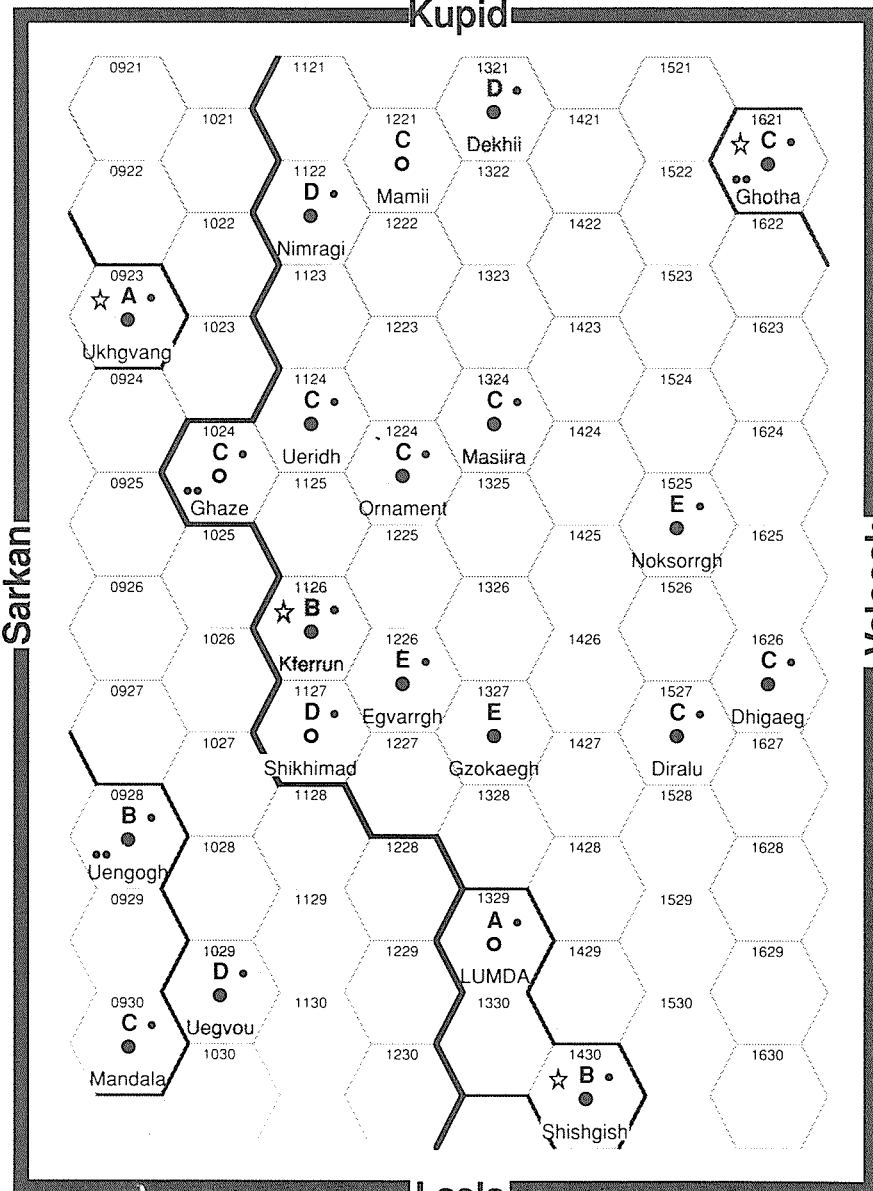
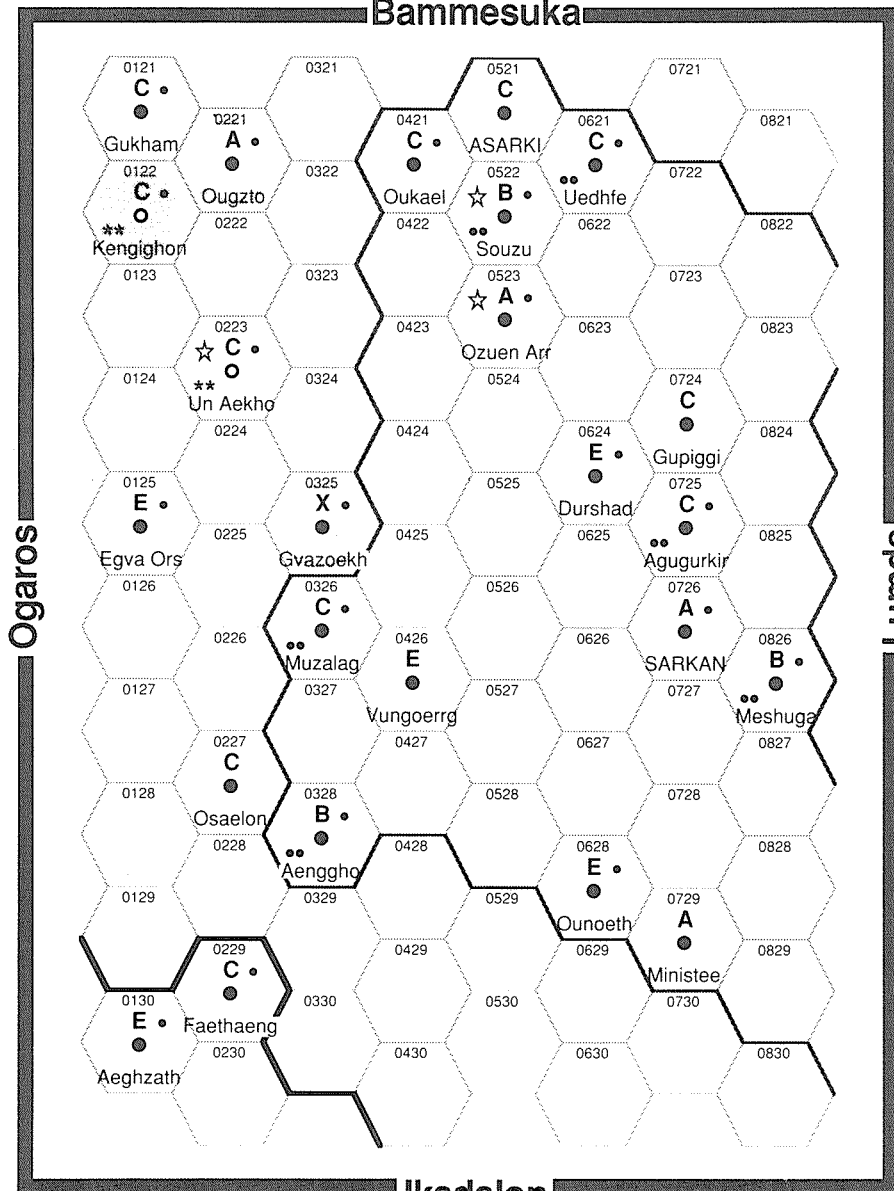


Sarkan

Lumda

Bammesuka

Kupid



Udinidir

Tozus Ganok

Lumda

Kaasam

Valosak

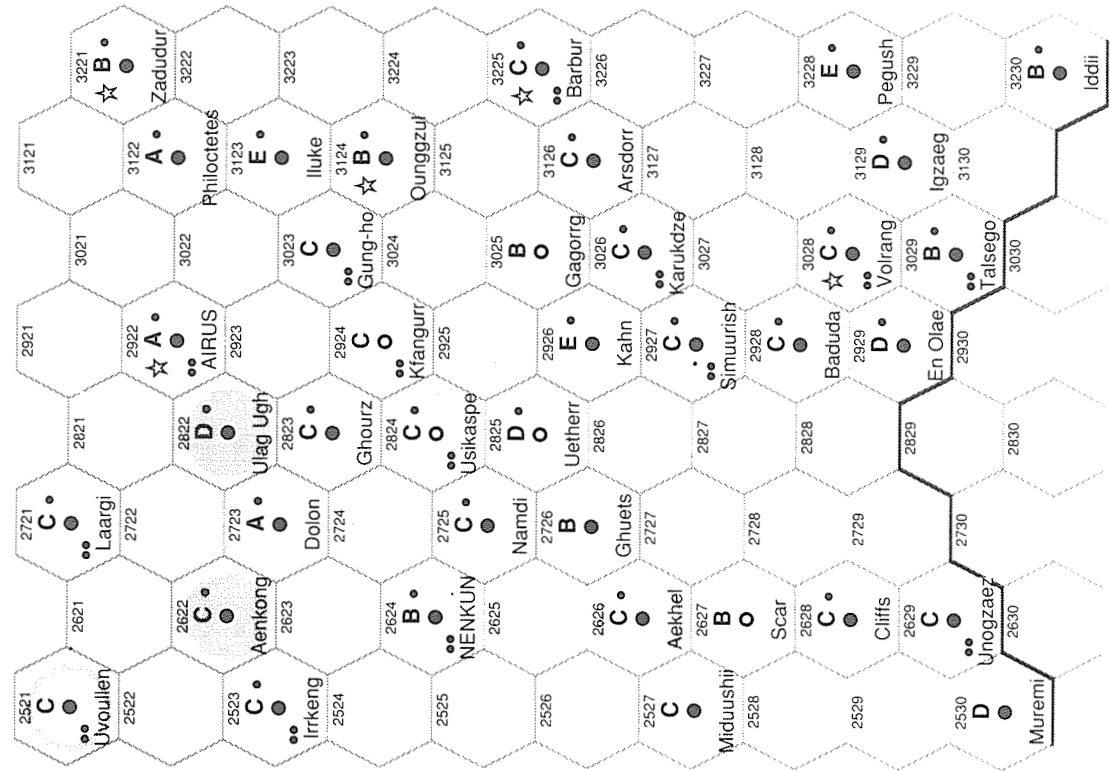
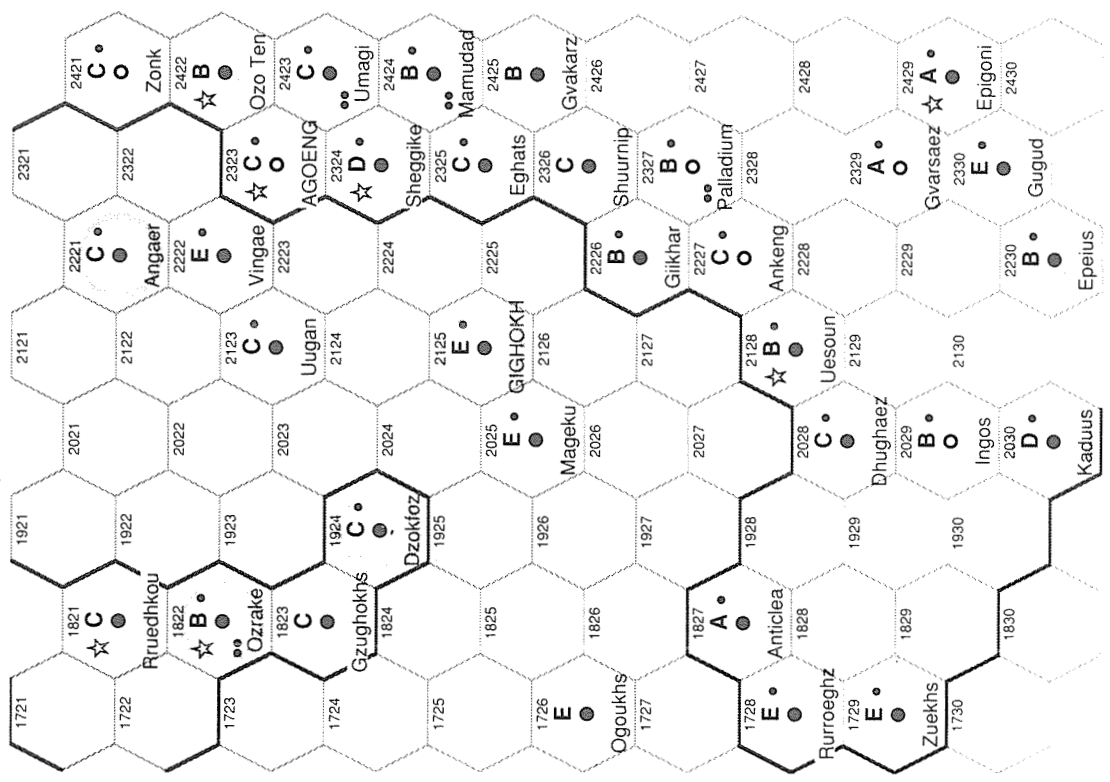
Julian

Maidza

Naem

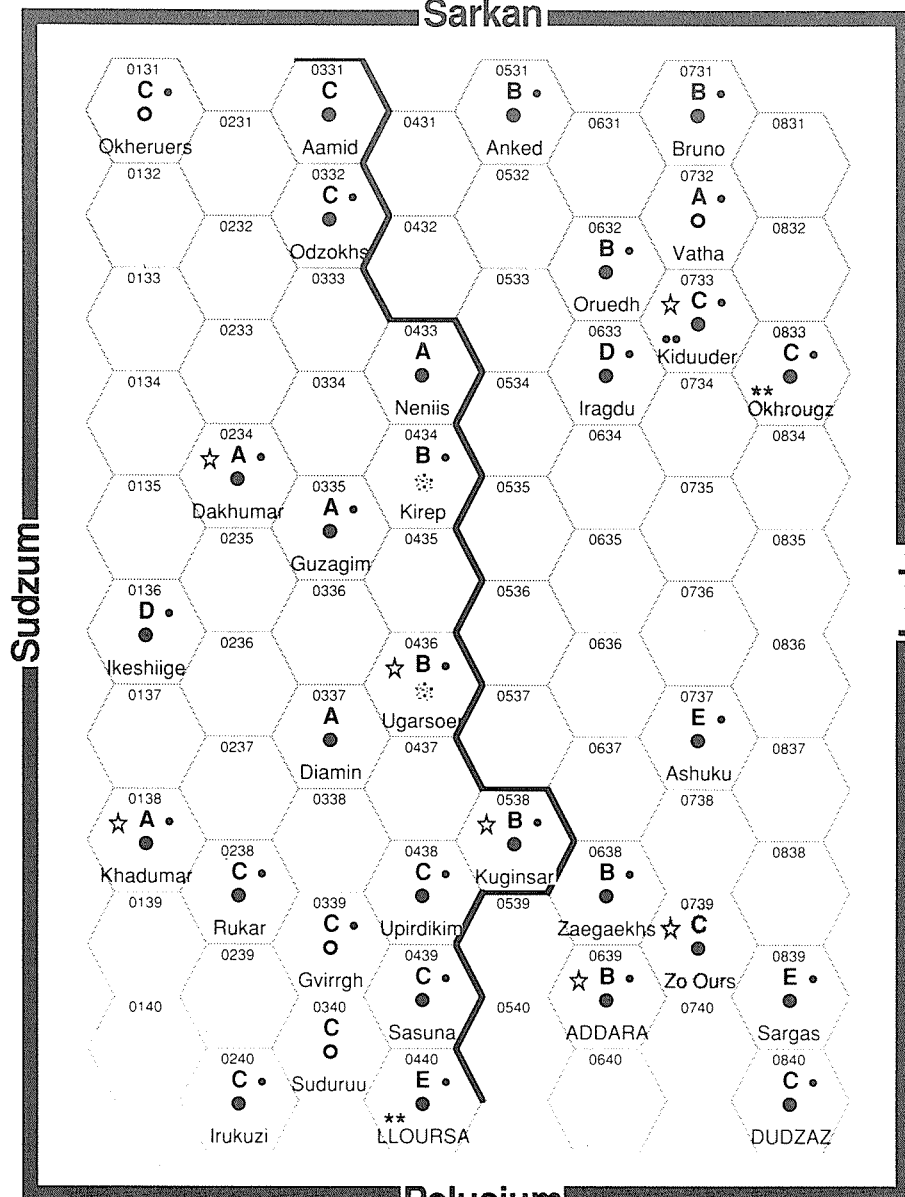
Valosak

Kaasam



Ikдалон

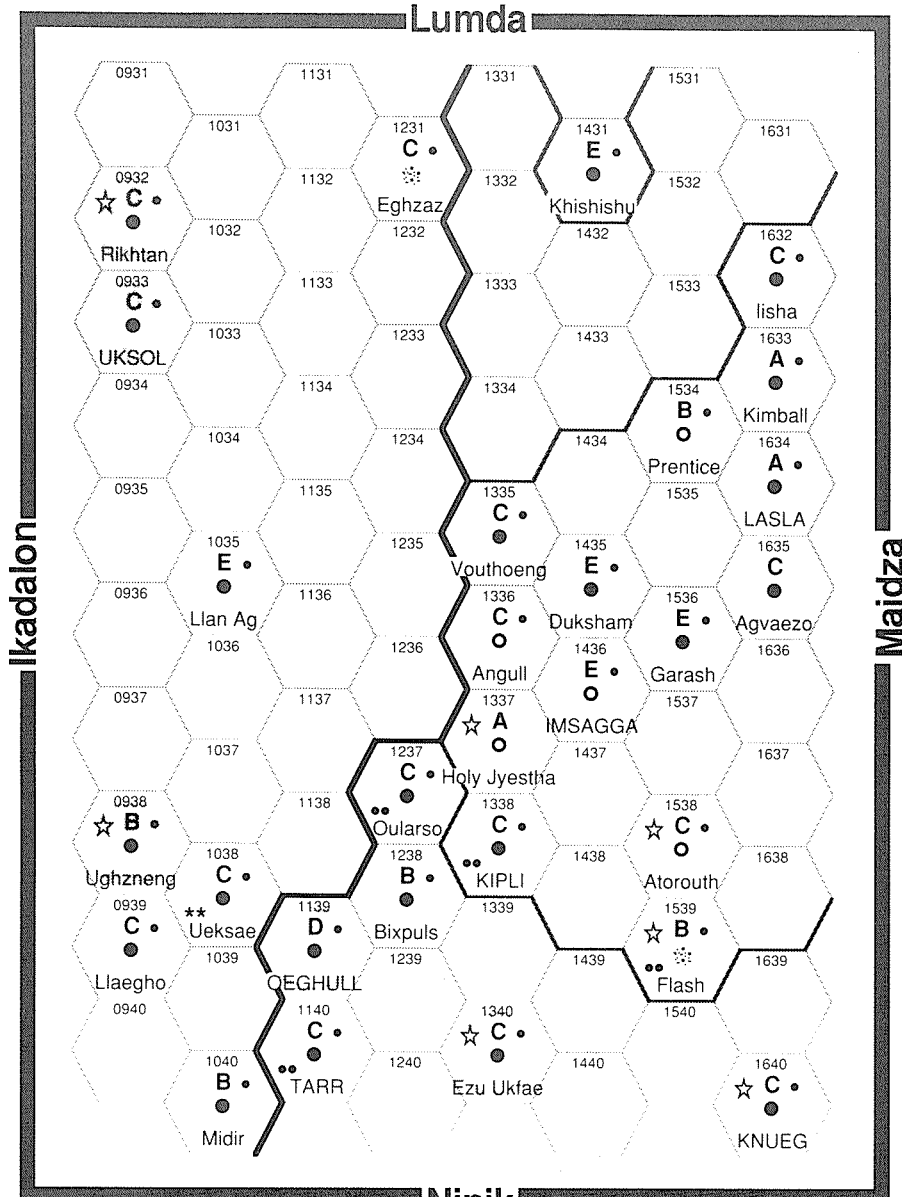
Sarkan



Pelusium

Lasla

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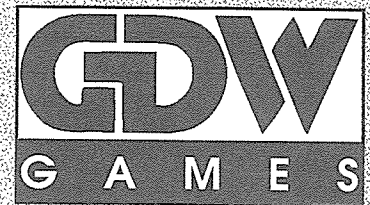
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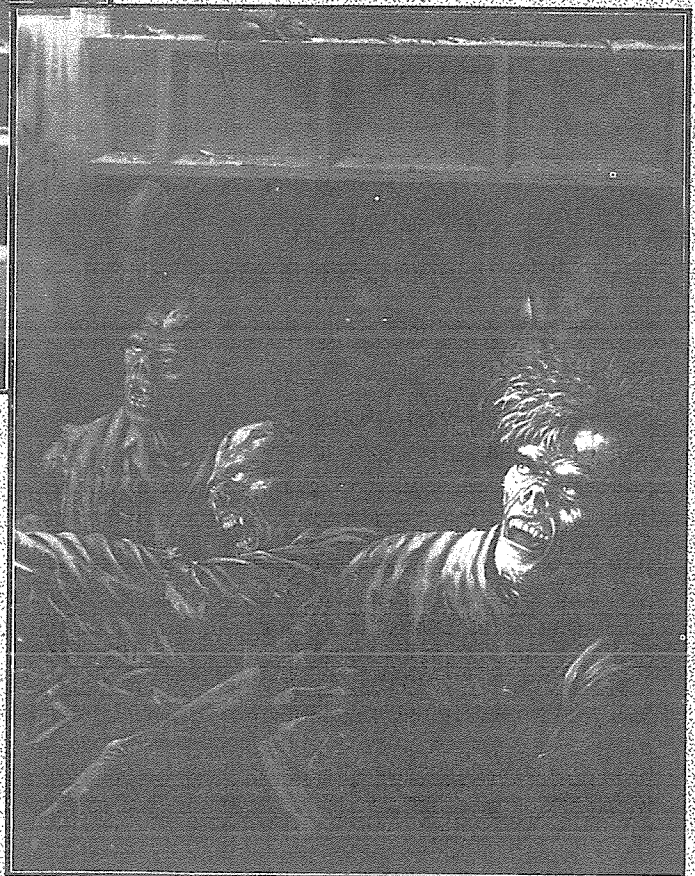
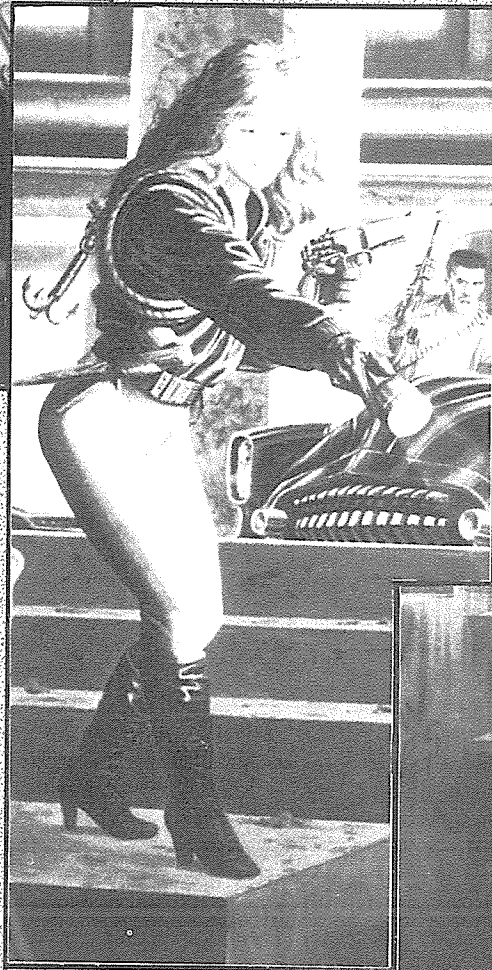
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The Dam

By Kevin Scrivner

"The Dam" is a versatile short adventure site which can fit into almost any campaign. Recommended parameters for an appropriate world to situate "The Dam" on are Atmosphere UPP 4-9, Population UPP 3-6, and Tech Level 9-11.

The wars over Imperial succession have drained the human resources from the frontier worlds, leaving some colonies nearly abandoned. The player characters, visiting one such world, are asked by Starport Authority (SPA) officials to find and assist four SPA personnel missing after being sent downside. Manned by a skeleton crew, the port is unable to mount a second expedition.

PRISONERS

Port officials sent a team to check on the welfare of mountain settlers when meteorologists indicated the area was in for severe storms. The team members are now being held prisoner in a village upstream from a controversial Imperial Corps of Engineers dam project. The lake created by the project would have forced the settlers to relocate, but they refused. A campaign of minor sabotage initiated by the settlers further increased tensions, but the construction workers were called away to the war effort before serious violence broke out. The town council mistook the starport investigators for Imperial enforcers sent to run the settlers off so that the dam could be opened.

The PCs must locate and rescue the SPA team and persuade the villagers that they are in immediate danger. The referee should give the PCs up to 48 hours to rescue the hostages and/or evacuate the village before rain clouds and flood waters arrive.

Few roads lead to the river-carved valley in which the village is located. Most of the construction equipment was flown in by heavy-lift grav vehicles. The village is located along the riverbank, although the bulk of the river's water has been diverted into a side channel by a temporary earthen dam upstream. The new channel rejoins the original course below the permanent dam, which is nearly operational.

In the event of a flood, the permanent dam and the cliffs downstream from it are likely to be the only safe places in the valley. Time and sabotage have weakened the temporary dam so that an especially wet season could cause it to collapse, filling the valley and drowning the village.

Villagers have driven away the new dam's caretaker crew except for one member who is tolerated because she jerry-rigged a means of supplying electricity to the town. She knows the earthen dam is unsafe but fears that the village elders won't believe her.

The SPA team is being held in the new dam's control tower. The tower's construction makes it a better makeshift prison than any building in the village.

VILLAGE

The village contains approximately 100 families who support themselves by logging, prospecting and terraced farming. Most of them are still living in portable modular cabins. The town's most prominent features are the town hall, which also serves as social club and church, and a large shed housing most of the community's vehicles: air/rafts, grav haulers, industrial laser carriers and the starport group's G-carrier. Parked outside the shed are huge construction vehicles of all descriptions that the villagers have seized.

Though not ordinarily violent, the villagers believe they are being forced to defend their families and livelihoods. Armed sentries have been posted to alert the village of approaching outsiders while most of the inhabitants go about their business. About one-fourth of the population is able to fight, armed with a motley assortment of nonmilitary weapons. There is no town militia, although some residents may have had military training.

Strangers won't necessarily be shot on sight but villagers will be distrustful of newcomers, especially armed newcomers with official-looking uniforms and papers. The PCs may be able to come in quietly and pass themselves off as merchants from a distant settlement, but they will be "invited" to leave if they ask too many questions too openly. The dam caretaker might supply the PCs with information, if approached correctly, but she will hesitate to confront the town elders.

MAP DESCRIPTION

The new dam is a hollow, double-arched, meter-thick structure about 135 meters tall. A narrow walkway runs along its top. Water flow to and through the powerhouse is gravitically controlled. The intake ducts are large enough to admit a human being; in the dam's current dry state, it is possible for the PCs to crawl through the ducts and emerge on the powerhouse's main observation deck. Stairs lead to an overhead catwalk containing instrument consoles and egress to the outer walkway.

In the middle of the dam sits the three-story control tower. A narrow stairwell (1)

provides access to all three floors.

The top level (2) contains controls for both the powerhouse and the spillway and offers an excellent view of the valley. PCs can use their Engineering skills to operate the controls but may need to make adjustments and repairs before they can do so. Two sentries are posted here with binoculars to scan the valley. They can communicate with other villagers downstairs by intercom.

The second level is taken up with the necessary computer and monitoring equipment and a storage area (3). The storage area is littered with tools, electronic components, coveralls and hard hats, one set of swimming equipment and an artificial gill.

The bottom level is a dormitory intended to house the dam's operators and caretakers. This is where the starport people are being held captive. It consists of a common room (4), a communal sleeping quarters for four to eight people (5), a dining room (6), restrooms (7A and 7B) and a small kitchen (8). The prisoners are guarded by five villagers, not including the sentries upstairs.

Sentries and guards are changed every five to eight hours as the villagers get done with their daily work.

SOLUTIONS

Once the players have located the captives, they can attempt to retrieve them in any number of ways. However, almost any plan is likely to fall into one of the following categories:

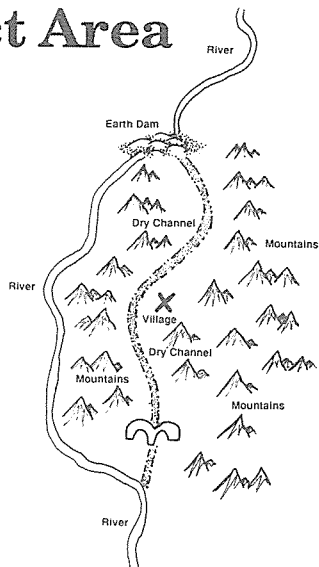
Rescue: A gun-toting answer to this situation is likely to turn a lot of living, breathing people into lifeless bodies. This includes the captives and the characters. Furthermore, after such an attempt, the characters will find that the villagers will completely ignore any subsequent peaceful/logical appeals they might make.

Capture the Dam from the Villagers Without Bloodshed: Difficult, but possible if the PCs manage to set up a number of ruses and false alarms which allow them to get "the drop" on small groups of villager sentries. The villagers are not eager to die and will surrender if outnumbered, outgunned, or taken completely by surprise. If the PCs then try to reason with the villagers and return the captured sentries to their families, the village elders are likely to listen to the PCs' appeal for immediate evacuation of the entire community.

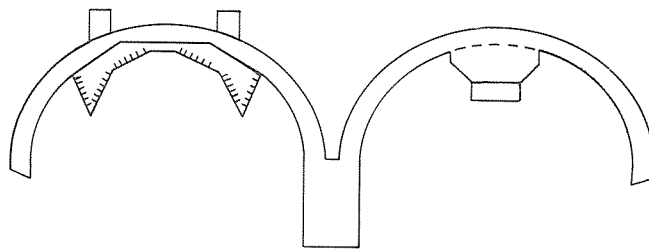
Direct Appeal: This will get the player characters either jailed in the tower or escorted forcibly to a point outside of town. Without any proof to the contrary, the elders will assume that the PC group is just part of another government attempt to get them to leave.

Refer to the maps on the next page. Ω

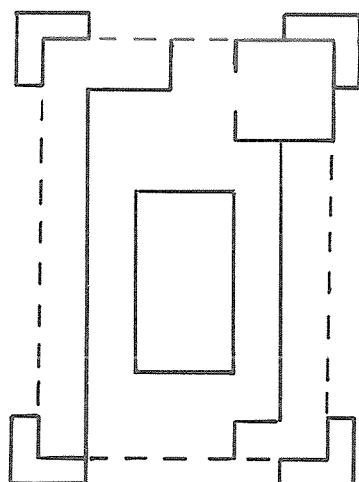
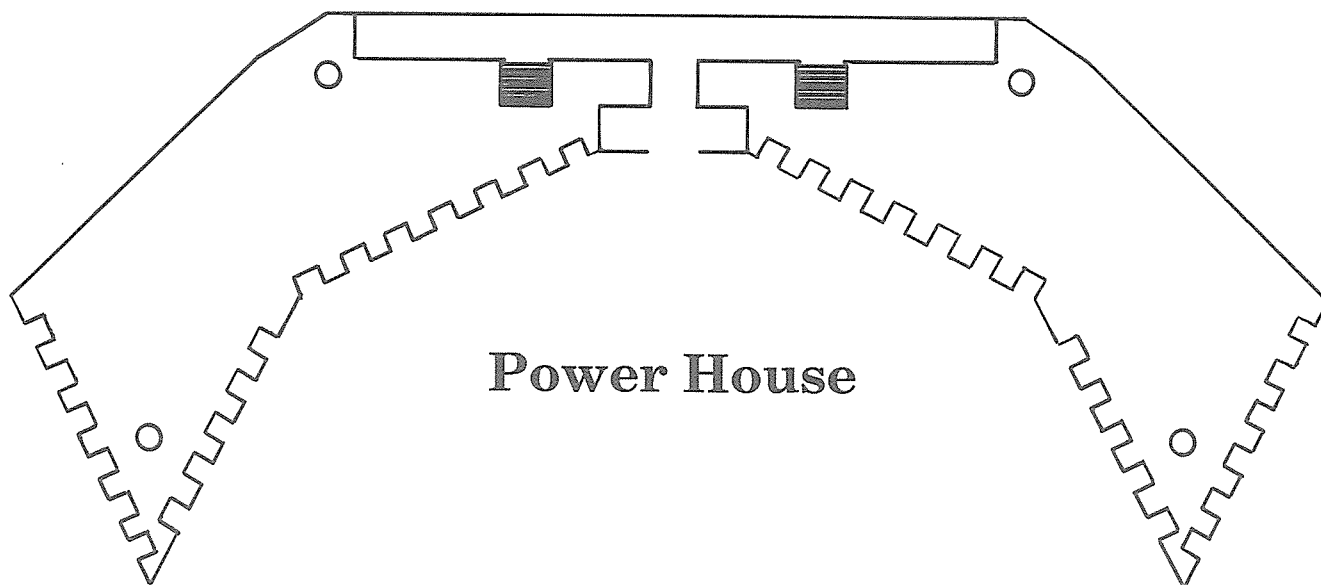
Project Area



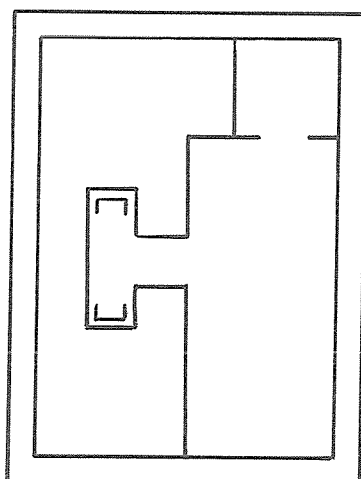
Dam



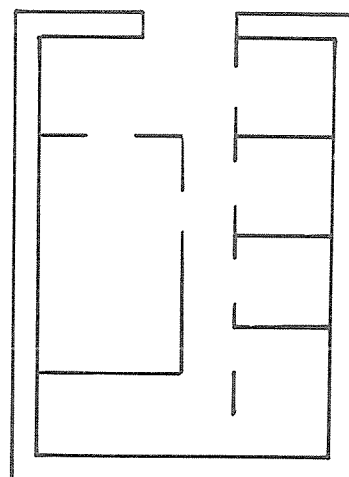
Power House



Tower Top



Tower Middle



Tower Bottom

TRAVELLER *News Service*

Rington/Massilia (2440 B443222-B)
SPECIAL BULLETIN

Date: 073-1121

¶ Unconfirmed reports from anonymous sources within the 170th Fleet indicate that the 22nd Imperial Fleet has been missing for over 60 days.

¶ The 22nd is a crack unit that had been deployed to the Diaspora Sector Depot in 1119, where it absorbed the Security Fleet already on site. The enlarged 22nd reportedly ceased responding to, or issuing, routine messages just after the beginning of the year.

¶ Rumors suggest that a special task force is in the Depot system conducting a thorough investigation. Courier sweeps to locate the fleet are under way in nearby subsectors.

Uson/Massilia (0717 A6847CD-C)

Date: 090-1121

¶ In an agreement announced here today, Hortalez et Cie has agreed to a major exchange of assets with the Vilani megacorporations Sharurshid and Naasirka.

¶ Most of Hortalez's new acquisitions are located in the Daibei, Diaspora, and Massilia sectors. These assets include factories, shipyards, industrial real estate, power plants, and space facilities.

¶ In exchange, Hortalez relinquished various holdings in Vland sector. It also liquidated an undisclosed portion of its shareholding position in the two Vilani megacorporations.

¶ "This marks a new era in cooperation between megacorporations," said Hortalez's senior portfolio director, Nils Petersen.

¶ "We and our Vilani peers will now enjoy more control in our respective spheres of primary influence. This concentration of commercial interests into smaller astrographic regions ensures continued economic security and health for the Imperium."

¶ Senior Director Petersen denied suggestions that the exchanges had been motivated by fears that assets further from megacorporate security bases are more susceptible to nationalization proceedings. He cited corporate communication and control difficulties as the major factor behind the move to divest such holdings.

Capital/Core (2118 A586A98-F)

Date: 112-1121

¶ In a wholly unanticipated public statement, Emperor Lucan announced that as of 090-1121, High Sylean be the only language spoken during Imperial audiences.

¶ This decree not only applies to the emperor's loyal subjects, but to all foreign dignitaries as well.

¶ The emperor explained that this decree is intended "to honor my Sylean subjects, who have remained loyal throughout this crisis. The other great languages of the Imperium are no longer spoken only by my subjects. They are spoken by traitors as well.

¶ "I will not hear such languages in my chambers."

¶ Lucan's minister of protocol, Sarir Gormakii, was dismissed the day before the decree was issued. Official spokesmen for the throne denied any connection between the events.

Eleusis/Solomani Rim (2109 A789831-E)

Date: 118-1121

¶ Breaking a long silence regarding the activities of the Imperial Regency of Intelligence and Security, naval spokepeople revealed that they had been surprised to discover that the primary IRIS enclave here on Eleusis has apparently been abandoned.

¶ In a terse statement, Admiral Ensuk'kli said, "The Regency is a sham, and everyone knows it. They ran away from Capital when they were needed most, and now they've run away again. God knows where they've gone, but they'd better stay hidden. The emperor's patience has run out."

¶ The admiral's comment regarding Emperor Lucan's patience refers to the fact that the Regency is responsible for confirming legal successors to the Iridium Throne and that it has already spent more than four years considering Lucan's claim.

¶ Sources within the navy (which must remain anonymous) suggest that there is a connection between Lucan's loss of patience and the two BatRons that accompanied Admiral Ensuk'kli in his search for the IRIS enclave. The admiral declined comment on this topic.

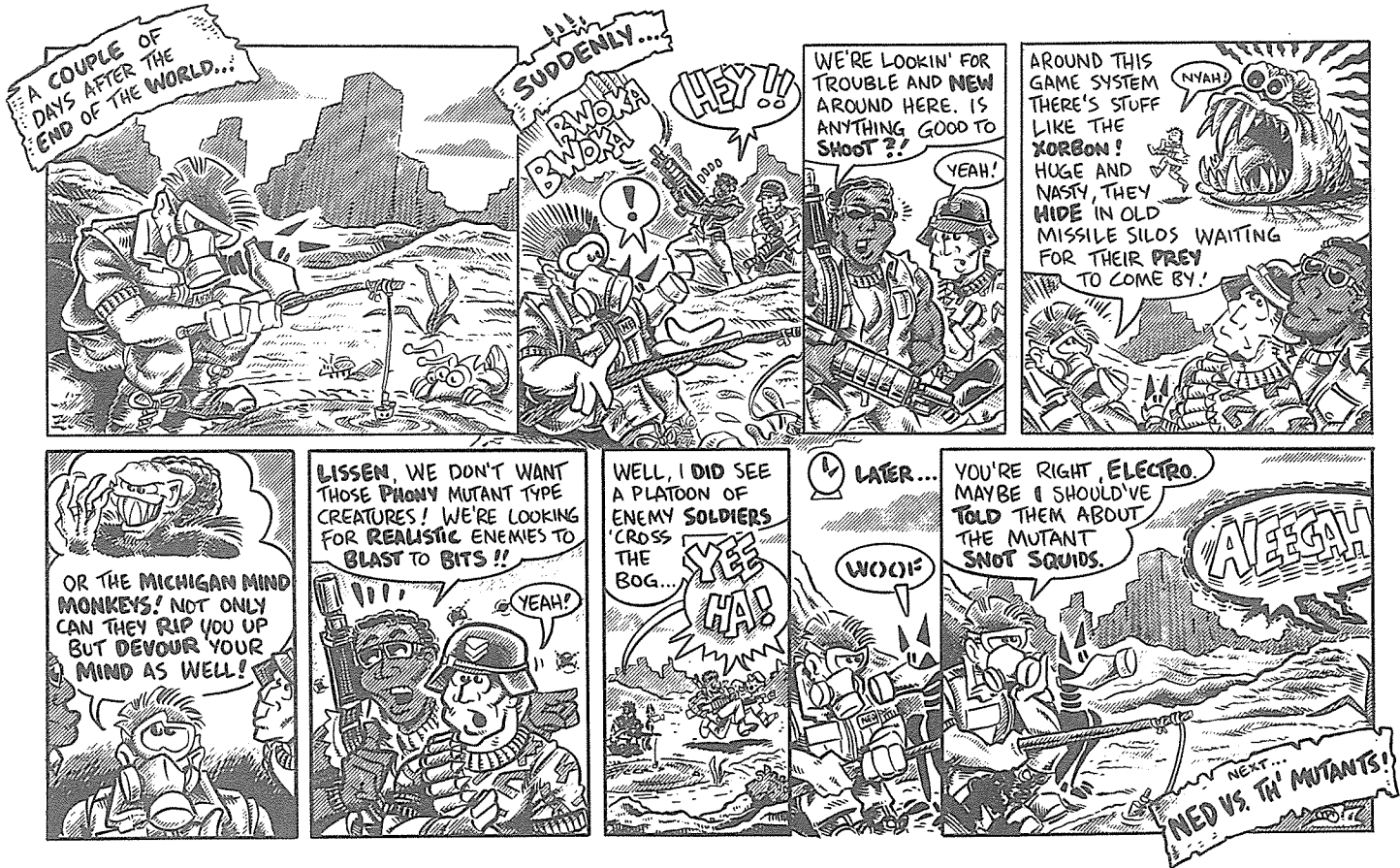
¶ Most local officials were surprised to learn of IRIS's sudden disappearance.

¶ They had expected the regency to continue its persistent (if futile) attempts to establish a Rim Concordiat dedicated to negotiating a truce with the Solomani.

¶ A 60-day cease-fire in 1117 had previously been the extent of the regency's diplomatic achievements in the sector to date.

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This article is necessary for referees who wish to run "Behind Blue Eyes" in a way that brings home the full flavor of the technologically primitive environment of Essex. However, these rules are also for general use in any conflict that includes a high-degree of hand-to-hand combat and represent an expansion of the **MegaTraveller** equipment and skills that are relevant to such combat.

As will become immediately evident to most referees and players, should conflict arise while they are on Essex (which is overwhelmingly likely), skill with firearms will not be very helpful. The local technological level and tech restrictions make firearms both rare and illegal. The emphasis is on those weapons that are indigenous to the "Early Renaissance" civilization of Essex. These include all the hand-to-hand weapons listed on the Combat Charts of the **Players' Manual**, and a few additional ones which will be listed below.

Equally important, however, is the presence of archaic forms of armor which—while of limited use against missile weapons—provide excellent protection against melee attacks.

Lastly, two new skills are added.

NEW WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Bastard Sword: This is also known as a hand-and-a-half sword, and is a weapon that falls midway between the sword and broadsword in terms of weight and attributes. It can be used with either one or two hands.

Hatchet: A smaller version of the hand axe, this weapon can be used in hand-to-hand combat or thrown.

Mace: A mace is a club with a blunt, smashing head attached. This head is usually made of metal and sports a number of pointed flanges. This weapon rose to prominence as plate-type armors became more common, because of its ability to crush the rigid surface of these armors.

Flail: The flail is similar to a mace, but the smashing head of this weapon is not attached to the haft directly, but by a length of chain. This allows the wielder to generate more force and thereby increase the chances of penetrating plate-type armors.

Maul: This is essentially a large, two-handed sledge. It was first used as a tool rather than a weapon. It is still useful for many construction tasks that are common to TL0-3 battlefields.

Military Pick: Another weapon that evolved from a construction tool, the military pick is a very specialized version of the pick. The spike on this pick is slender yet heavy, allowing the wielder to concentrate a maximum amount of force on a small area of the defender's plate armor.

When It's Lances, Not Lasers Combat in Pregunpowder Settings

By Charles E. Gannon

Buckler, Shield, and Tower Shield: These shields are of different sizes and weights, but all serve essentially the same function: to block and/or deflect an attacker's blow. The buckler is the smallest of shield, offering little protection, but being very easy to use. The shield covers perhaps 50% of the defender's body, and the tower shield as much as 80%. The armor value of a shield is *added directly* to the value of any worn armor.

Leather Armor: This is the equivalent of the jack armor listed in the regular **MegaTraveller** rules. The primary distinction is price. This armor is churned out quickly and in tremendous bulk, using any type of hide that offers an adequate measure of protection.

Ring Mail: This is leather armor which has had rings or small plates sewn onto it.

Cured Leather: A step above regular leather, this armor is made by chemically treating and boiling the leather. This hardens the hide without sacrificing resilience or lightness. The greatly increased cost reflects the more specialized labor involved rather than expensive materials.

Chainmail: This armor is comprised of interconnected, small-gauge chain links. It is heavy, and its production is very labor-intensive.

Banded Mail: This armor represents the ultimate achievement in the technology of the chainmail suit. It is made up of a complex and sturdy pattern of linkages interwo-

ven with reinforcing leather bands.

Field Plate: This earliest form of plate armor is somewhat cumbersome, and has a poor distribution of weight. The individual wearing field plate is mostly covered by solid metal plates supplemented with a fair amount of chainmail which offers protection to the limbs and joints. Movement is restricted and it takes special training to teach an individual who has fallen to get back to his/her feet unassisted. At TL2, the extreme movement difficulties of this type of armor are largely eliminated.

Full Plate: This is the most advanced form of plate armor. Each suit is built specifically for its wearer, although this does not preclude other individuals from attempting to wear a suit (the referee must assign penalties based on differences in body type). There is a high degree of articulation in the joints, with better suits providing full plate encasement for each individual finger. Although heavier than field plate, the weight of this armor is carefully distributed and architected to ensure great freedom of movement. The drawback to this armor is its tremendous expense, which is largely the result of the number of man-hours of specialized labor that it takes to construct a full suit.

Modern Combat Armor and Battle Dress: These types of armor are also "plate armor," for purposes of hand-to-hand combat. Of course, they do not impede movement.

Note: The armor types listed in the **MegaTraveller Players' Manual** that only give one armor value use this value for hand-to-hand combat as well as missile combat, etc.

NEW SKILLS

Many of the natives of Essex (and other similar worlds) attain proficiencies in two types of skills that are not frequently found frequently elsewhere: Shield skill and Main Gauche skill (the use of two weapons simultaneously, with one in each hand).

Shield Skill: This skill allows an individual to use a shield without incurring a -1 penalty when rolling hand-to-hand to hit tasks. Furthermore, for every Shield skill level *over 1*, the individual receives one point of a hand-to-hand combat *block* modifier (used in countering an attacker's to hit task rolls). A buckler may be used by an unskilled individual without penalty.

Main Gauche Skill: Main gauche (literally: *left hand*) is the skill one must have in order to fight with a different hand-to-hand weapon in each hand simultaneously. The aggregate weight (in kilograms) of both weapons *cannot* exceed 30% of the character's Strength statistic. The "left-hand," or secondary, weapon may either be used to conduct an attack or to block, but it cannot do both in the same round of com-

NEW HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS

Large Blades

TL	Weapon	Pen	Block	Damage	Kg	Cr
1	Bastard Sword (used one-handed)	5	3	3	1.8	250
1	Bastard Sword (used two-handed)	6	2	3		

Axes (and Maces)

0	Hatchet	3	0	3	0.6	40
0	Mace	3*	1	2	1.5	60
0	Flail	4*	0	3	2.2	60
0	Maul (two-handed)	5†	0	3	2.8	50
0	Military pick	3‡	1	2	1.2	50

*Penetration rolls conducted by this weapon against any plate-type armor are resolved as though the armor's hand-to-hand combat value were: *2 less, †3 less, or ‡4 less.

PERSONAL ARMOR

TL	Armor	Armor Value Hand-to-Hand	Armor Value Other	To Hit Penalty	Movement Reduction	Kg	Cr
0	Buckler	1	0	—	—	0.8	8
0	Shield	2	1	—	—	3.0	35
0	Tower shield	2	2	1	-10%	5.0	50
0	Leather	1	0	—	—	6.0	10
0	Ring mail	3	1	1	-10%	12.0	65
1	Cured leather	3	1	—	—	7.5	45
1	Chainmail	4	1	1	-20%	16.0	400
1	Banded mail	5	2	1	-30%	18.0	700
1	Field plate	6	3	3	-50%	25.0	1000
2	Full plate	7	4	2	-40%	28.0	3500

Armor Value Hand-to-Hand: The armor value of the entry against penetration task rolls resulting from hand-to-hand attacks. **Armor Value Other:** The armor value of the entry against anything other than penetration task rolls resulting from hand-to-hand attacks. **To Hit Penalty:** The negative DM imposed upon any hand-to-hand to hit tasks attempted by the wearer. **Movement Reduction:** The reduction in the character's movement when wearing this armor (effects are additive, not multiplicative).

MEGATRAVELLER™

bat. Therefore, at the *beginning* of the combat round, a characters using the Main Gauche skill must declare whether they are attacking or blocking with their secondary weapon.

A character with the Main Gauche skill must have at least one skill level in both of the weapons being used. At Main Gauche-1, the character uses the main weapon at his full skill level with that weapon. He uses the secondary weapon as though his skill level were zero.

For every additional level of Main Gauche skill, the secondary weapon may be used at one skill level higher. Therefore, a character with Main Gauche-3 could use his main weapon at his full skill level with that weapon. He could use the secondary weapon at a maximum skill level of 2.

Note that the use of the secondary weapon may never *exceed* the skill level actually possessed by the character. So if, in the example above, the character only had a skill level of 1 in his secondary weapon, he could not take advantage of the maximum *allowed* skill level of 2. Ω

These rules will be especially helpful to those involved in the three-part "Behind Blue Eyes" adventure which started in Challenge 48 and will continue in Challenge 50.

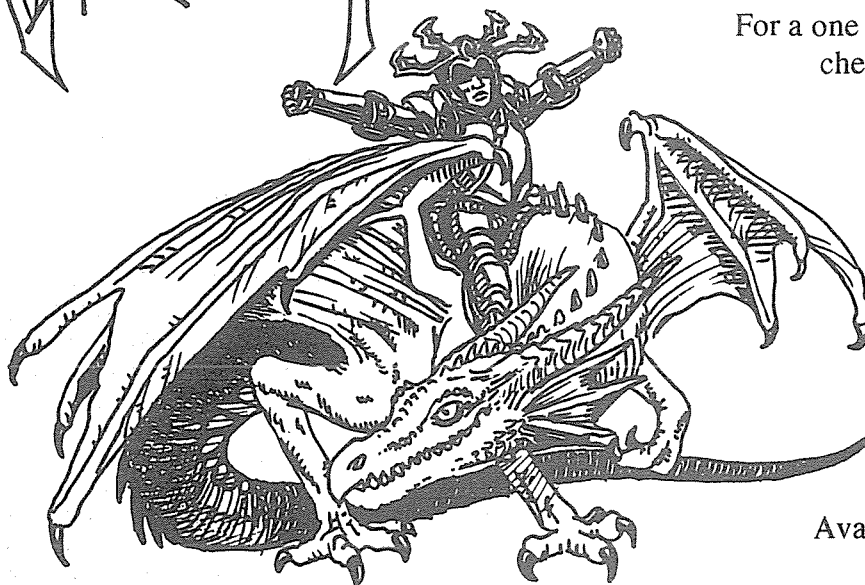
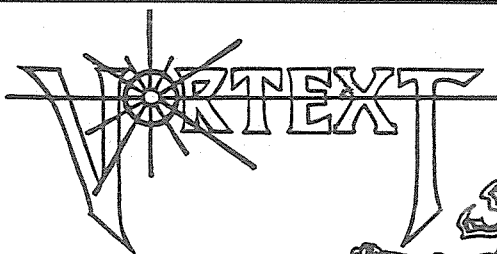
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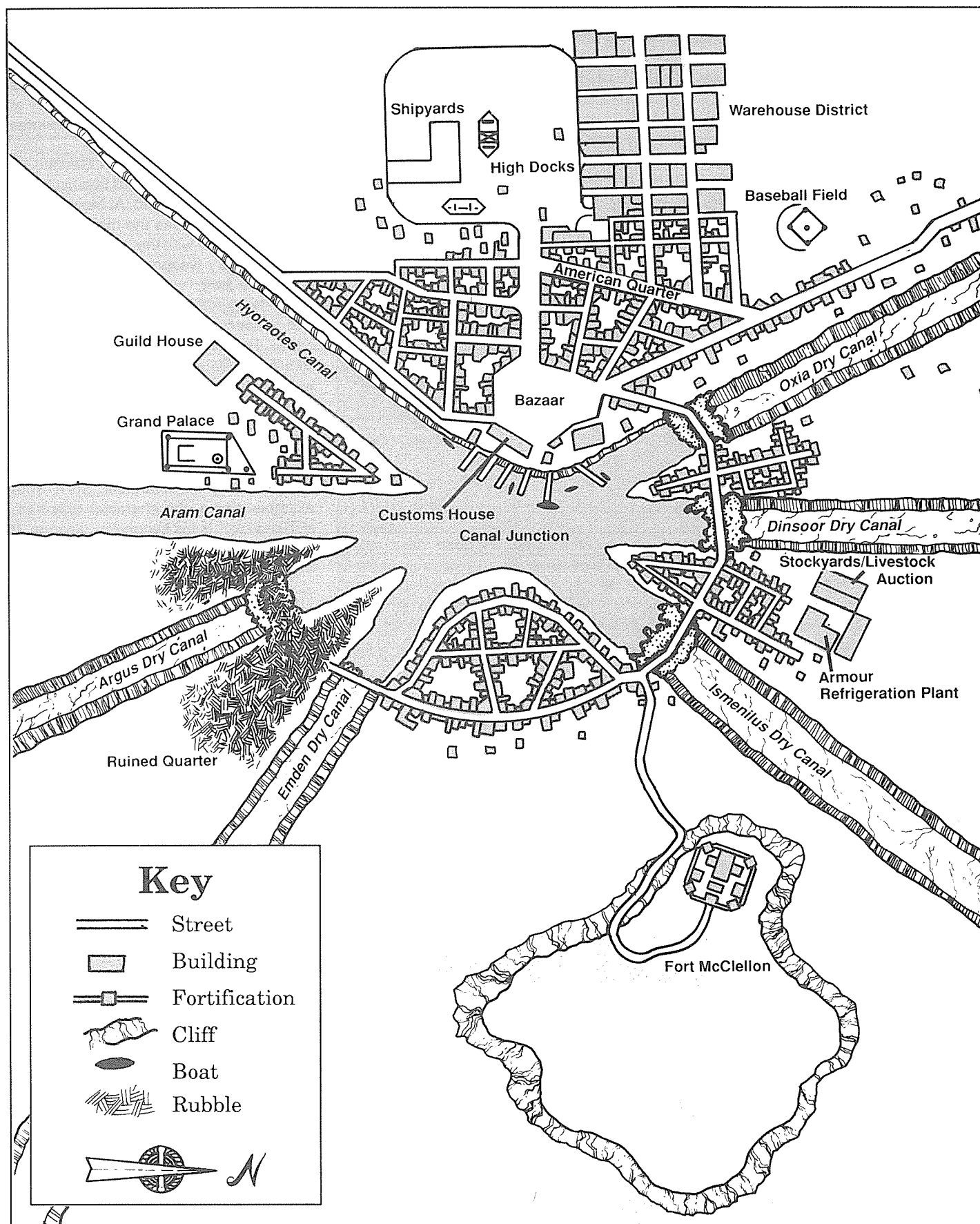
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Thymiamata: 1889





t has been stated by my fellow countrymen that the Yanks are rather like mice: They are everywhere you look and are always more than a bit of a nuisance. If these mice have a breeding hole, I should say it is Thymiamata. Never have I seen such an ostentatious display of capitalism gone wild—quaint native inns turned into rowdy gambling establishments, Martians walking the streets armed with modern repeater rifles imbibing harsh whiskey, and a host of other corruptions of major and minor proportions that the Yankees irresponsibly term “progress.” I fear not only for myself but for all the Red Planet if these rodents achieve any more of the glory they seem to feel they are destined for and carry their lack of values to other city-states. Unfortunately, from the look of it this may happen all too soon!

THYMIAMATA: 1889

At present, the Thymiamata is a boom-town. The demand for off-world goods is extremely high among Martians, and the city has more direct access to American goods than any other on the planet. Yankee trade policy, which is akin to Thymiamatan principles, holds nothing back, ensuring products flow wherever there is money to pay for them. Trade flows just as vigorously in the other direction—American purchasing agents will buy anything Martian for a dime if they can get a quarter for it stateside.

And as if this did not bring enough money-hungry Yanks to the city, silver was discovered in the Chryse Mountain Range. The resulting Silver Rush of 1889 has brought hundreds of hopeful prospectors and may prove to make similar “rushes” in Alaska, California, Nevada and Venezuela look like warm-up practices in comparison. Many Americans now live in Thymiamata, most of whom reside in the American Quarter. The American Quarter consists mostly of recently built brick, stone and wooden buildings and looks more like it belongs in the deserts of Arizona, Nevada or California than the Red Planet. It has an atmosphere as rowdy and untamed as any frontier town.

CITY STATISTICS

Population: 40,000 (plus 4200 humans)

Government: Strong Merchant

Corruption: Honest

Economy: Mercantile

Vitality: Wealthy

Army: Poor*

Army Size: 2*

Fleet Quality: Green*

Fleet Size: £100,000*

Attitude Toward Humans: Friendly

*Does not include the statistics for the US Army or the gunboat *Ranger*. The mercenaries of the ranking families are also not included.

IMPORTANT SECTIONS ABOUT TOWN

Refer to the Thymiamata Map to locate the areas discussed below.

American Quarter: This section of the city was built on the remains of a ruined district of the city, and thus has a disproportionately large number of recently constructed wood and brick buildings. It uses the dry bed of the former Oxia Canal as a main street. The quarter is now home to several thousand Yankees and has dozens of businesses ranging from small groceries and outfitters to the modern refrigerated warehouse of the Armour Meat Packing Company. The area is a beehive of activity during the day and boasts an extremely rowdy and dangerous nightlife.

Stockyards: A large area filled with metal and wooden corrals, the stockyards are the only major center on the planet where live-stock can be bought and sold at auction. This activity takes place at the first of every month, during which time confusion is the watchword as ranchers drive their herds of gashants, eegaar and ruumet breehrthrough the major streets of the city. It is during this time that most citizens keep to the backroads and alleyways, though this still doesn't guarantee complete safety.

Armour Refrigeration Plant: Before his efforts on Venusstadt, Josephus Martin designed several large refrigeration warehouses for Armour Meats. One such structure was shipped out from Earth and assembled in Thymiamata, where it holds eegaar and gashant meat destined to be shipped offworld. The plant has given the company a near monopoly on fresh meat coming from the Red Planet, and plans are currently in the works for another, smaller icehouse that will store Earth meats destined for consumption on Mars. Given most resident Yanks' nostalgia for top sirloin, this could be quite a money maker.

Baseball Field: By 1889, baseball is the great American pastime. Accordingly, a baseball diamond was built on an open clearing just outside the American Quarter. Games are still between teams assembled on the spot, but the American Quarter Chamber of Commerce is trying to organize a more structured league.

Bazaar: Aside from the one at Syrtis Major, the open-air stalls of Thymiamata hold the largest selection of merchandise on the Red Planet. From forced-draught boilers to “hour-glass” dresses to dime novels, it can all be found at the bazaar at one time or another.

Warehouse District: Once hangars for the great kites that comprised the city's merchant fleet, these mammoth buildings are now used to hold untold amounts of goods from all over every world in the Solar System. The ranking families own many of them, but several of these gigantic struc-



tures are now owned by American corporations as well. Some of the warehouses near Thymiamata High Port are used for their original intended purpose and hold up to three or four smaller kites, screw galleys and/or steam vessels apiece.

Fort McClellon: Named for a famous general of the American Civil War, Fort McClellon now houses the bulk of the US Army forces on Mars. The fort was originally a long-abandoned villa of some wealthy merchant prince, but has been renovated by the US Army Corps of Engineers and serves its current purpose quite well. The 12-pound guns of the fort can be positioned to cover most any section of the city as well as aerial targets, and a number of new style Maxim guns are in position to fire on any approaches to the building.

Grand Palace: The former seat for the king of Thymiamata, the impressive and beautiful Grand Palace was heavily damaged in the city's civil war. Over the years, all major damage has been repaired and the graceful structure now serves as the main government building. Offices for all factions of Thymiamata's ruling council are present in the building, and the US Embassy occupies the upper floors of the East Wing. Other nations maintain consulates in the building, including Germany, France, Russia, Japan, Canada, Great Britain and Italy.

Guild House: If not as large as the Grand Palace, the guild house is certainly as beautiful. It now serves as a meeting place for all artisan and trade guilds of the city, and each guild maintains its offices here. The guilds exercise a fair amount of influence over the government in Thymiamata. They have been known to be able to hold up proposed laws for months or even defeat them entirely, since it is their people who do the actual planning and skilled labor for every public works project in the city proper.

Canal Junction: Though only two of its original seven canals still function, Thymiamata conducts a great deal of its trade with nearby cities through the canal network. The levees that mark the dry canal beds are used to moor hundreds of boats and barges that call on Thymiamata, and berthing fees alone constitute a healthy percentage of city revenues. The dock area is, unfortunately, a natural breeding ground for the criminal elements of society, and travel after dark is quite dangerous for even a well-armed party. The residential slum around

Continued on page 50.

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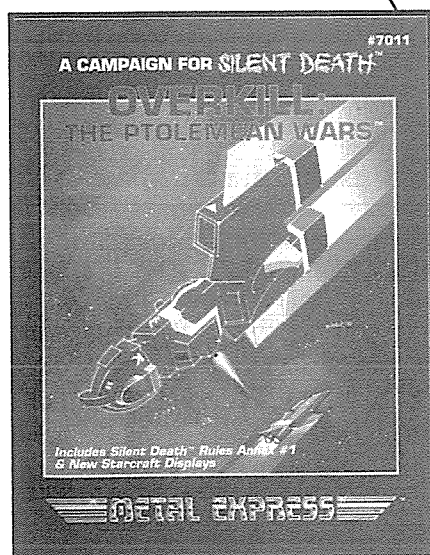
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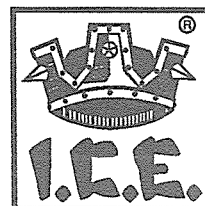
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Continued from page 47.

the docks (called "the wet docks" by the locals to avoid confusion with the high port) is home to every professional thief and murderer in the Chryse area, and many of these criminals are for hire if a prospective employer survives long enough to contact them.

High Docks: This large, open area of the city is busy day and night with cloudship and ether flyer traffic of all nationalities. The US Army maintains the gunboat *Ranger* here, and the hodgepodge mixture of patrol boats that constitute the Thymiamatan Navy calls this port home as well. Large pits of flame, fed by the gas from the city living sewers, provide illumination so bright that day or night makes no difference to the bustling port, making it as busy at 3 a.m. as it is at 12 noon.

Shipyards: While not actually capable of building aerial vessels, the shipyards of Thymiamata are able to make up to moderate repairs on just about any kind of cloudship, aerial steam vessel or ether flyer—including conversions—though the cost is about double that in the Crown Colony. Around the edges of the shipyards there are a number of inns and taverns that cater to all classes of society, with the lower-class establishments being nearer to the landing grounds. The Edison Ether Flyer Company has recently broken ground on a major repair facility, but estimates it will not be operational for some time yet.

Ruined Quarter: The remnants of a glorious past, the Ruined Quarter is a section of town far too damaged in the civil war to feasibly be repaired by the new government. Many of the structures here are still breathtakingly beautiful, though they show the cracks, chips and stains of decades of neglect. The section of the ruins by the wet docks is densely populated with the less desirable elements of society, but the vast sections inland are inhabited only by a few crazy and recluse individuals who want nothing to do with society. Rumors about hidden caches of gold and jewels abound, and given the fact that a great many pre-civil war banks were located in the quarter some of these rumors may be true, though no search has cashed in yet.

Customs Offices: These small buildings are found at every point where goods enter the city. Customs houses resemble police stations more than anything else, because platoons of Thymiamatan defense force troopers (members of Colonel Forrester's US Army detachment, see below) are stationed in them with the customs officials and conduct their random patrols from the houses. Customs fees levied on cargoes are a flat rate rather than a percentage of the cargo's value; they are generally low (to encourage trade). The main purpose of the

customs officials is to inhibit the flow of contraband goods, including arms, to the High Martians.

ANTIHUMAN UPRISINGS

While massive riots to protest the human presence in Thymiamata are always a passing fear of concerned humans, they are much less likely here than in Syrtis Lapis. There are resident Worm Cult and Ground Cleanser factions in the city, but they are nothing more than a few disorganized malcontents, responsible mostly for random acts of graffiti, the occasional assault and little else.

Mercantile Goodwill: Antihuman movements never really got any momentum going in Thymiamata. There are several reasons for this. First, and perhaps foremost, Thymiamata is a business town, and Americans mean offworld goods which are in great demand. Almost every merchant in the city realizes this trade brings the wealth and status the city so desires, and if this is accomplished by putting up with a few humans, so be it. Second, American aims are largely nonterritorial, so no resident Martians feel as though the US has any plans for annexing their homeland (or city in this case). Third, merchants from any world seem to have a natural rapport with one another, and Yankee and Thymiamatan traders are no different. Incompatible human and Martian languages were quickly overcome through the development of a mercantile pidgin tongue, and both races make money through cooperative trade: Wells Fargo loans money to Martian businesses, Sears contracts with local bargemen to carry its goods, American antiquity buyers up the price of the city's artworks, and so on. The result is a symbiosis few offworlders share with Martians.

Not So Home on the Range: Some problems have been encountered in the Chryse Plains, where American ranchers are setting up homesteads on waterholes and oases formerly used by Hill Martians. The herding of ruumet breehr and gashants for transportation and food (gashant meat for some reason has become a delicacy in some of New York's more posh restaurants) has become big business, and many ranchers are fencing off the land with that now infamous range shrinker, barbed wire. Naturally, Hill Martian tribes are resentful of this encroachment on what they see as communal land, and some are more violent about this resentment than others, but nothing large-scale has happened yet.

High Martian Problem: The real problem facing Thymiamata is not within city walls, nor is it to be found on the plains. Such danger lurks in the steep bluffs and towering peaks of the Oxia-Chryse Mountain Range, home of the dreaded High Martians.

For hundreds, more likely thousands, of years, the resident High Martians have posed a threat to trade caravans in the Chryse area. The location of the mountains enabled the beastmen to launch attacks on the cities with little difficulty, and almost all overland and canal traffic comes very close to the mountains in one area or another. When times were good and money was plentiful, guards could be hired to protect mercantile interests with minimal loss. But when times were bad, the High Martian beasts had the upper hand, plundering barge or caravan at will. High Martian income that was not derived from such piracy was brought in through the sale of liftwood from the massive groves in the plateaus. Truly it can be said that the High Martians of the Chryse area were among the richest brutes on the Red Planet.

Tribute to the Beastmen: Faced with mounting losses, the cities in the Chryse area established a habit of sending tribute directly to the High Martians in return for guarantees of safe passage, and over the generations this became an established business practice. Nobody—but nobody—would dare make a move on the liftwood groves, for to do so would bring a return to the days of High Martian piracy and terror. The High Martians were well pleased with this situation, one in which they ruled unquestionably through fear and intimidation.

Coming of the Americans: When the Yankees came to town, they followed the Martian lead of paying tribute, which pleased the savages to no end. Not only could they have a steady income from doing nothing more than looking tough, but they got all advanced offworld "toys" to boot. What the beasts did not know was that these Americans who so cowardly paid them were lobbying their congressmen for protection at the same time. President Grover Cleveland and the Congress were already fearful of antihuman uprisings, and even though the US did not have any formal jurisdiction over the Thymiamatan area, there were just too many Americans present to ignore there. So appropriations for an armed presence were made, and in 1889, the first elements of the US Army arrived in Thymiamata.

Enter the US Army: The unit's commanding officer was Colonel Robert E. Forrester, a veteran of both the Civil War and the Indian Wars who made no secrets about his desire to eradicate the High Martian terror once and for all. In a town speech, he announced that Americans citizens and their dependents were no longer, and indeed never had been, obligated to pay a ransom "to such scum and villainy as I have seen in those mountains." Likewise, he urged the Martians to cease their tribute as well. When the news of Forrester's little speech reached the High Martian kings, many a temper tantrum was thrown.

Thymiamata: A Brief Historical Perspective

By J. Alfred Shears, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Oxford University

It has been theorized by modern scientists that Thymiamata, along with other grand canal junctions across the equator of the Red Planet, was a strategic point in the distribution of water from the polar ice caps to the rest of the dying world. Certainly its position—which is almost on the same parallel as Syrtis Major, Aubochon, Olympia and Tharsis—allowed for the best use of gravity to move literally billions of gallons of water across the equator everyday during that age when Martian society was capable of such feats.

Venice of Mars: Verifiable records trace the history of the city back some 5000 years, and depict the city as deriving great power and influence through trade and commerce, possibly rivaling Syrtis Major at one time. This has led many historians to compare Thymiamata's position to that of Earth's Venice during the later Middle Ages. Like the Medieval Italian city, Thymiamata developed a wealthy merchant class based on the extended family. These merchants each grew to control different aspects of economic and political life, and loyalty to one's family was stressed above all else. Ancient texts report violence was often used as a means to solve problems of clan rivalry, and skirmishes were once a common sight in the city streets. Even today, family palaces and townhomes in the old quarters of Thymiamata have battlements and narrow windows, an architectural influence which lingers from this period. Usually, however, interfamily violence was kept to a minimum by a king, who swore allegiance to and derived his power from the Seldons. Ironically, the later generations of Thymiamatan kings became the adversaries that unified the merchant princes.

Architectural Beauty: It was during the reign of the early Seldons that the Venice of Mars was reported to be the most beautiful city on the Red Planet, and produced some of the most exquisite architectural wonders ever accomplished at the hands of a Martian, save perhaps for the magnificent canals that give the planet life. Reminiscent of similar efforts in 14th-century Italy, tall and graceful civic centers, temples and palaces were built in community efforts that belied the hatred of the clans. Like their counterparts on a distant Earth—the Cathedral of Saint Mark, the Doges' Palace—such structures as the Grand Palace, Temporal Courts and others incorporate statues, painting, reliefs, columns, temponas, domes and arches from all over the Red Planet, fixtures which were purchased by travelling Thymiamatan merchant princes and brought to the city. Even today, the city is revered for its abundance of well-preserved art work, much of it brought to Thymiamata during this period.

Decline: As seems the case universally, all good things must come to an end. So was it with the Venice of Mars. No exact year can be given, but the beginning of the end is thought to have occurred some 1500 years ago, about five centuries after the bulk of Mars was well on the road to decadence. Thymiamata felt the breakup of Seldon's Empire, but trade with other cities continued regardless of political affiliation. In addition, the wealth stockpiled in the city's coffers and a large army kept the city out of the petty wars that fragmented the once-mighty empire.

But inevitably, the events of the outside world affected the still-prosperous city, mostly in the form of declining trade and risky travel. No longer was the army of Seldon around to protect Thymiamata's barges from bandits and those beastly High Martians. The personal army of the city's king was available, but it was hardly up to such a large-scale task, nor was it willing. Barges which came to the city's canal junction with goods grew fewer in number every year, until the activity slowed to only a trickle.

Tax Problems: As the economy fell into recession, then depression, the ruling king imposed taxes on the merchant princes for the first time in the city's history. Such a move was resented, but accepted as necessary even at first. Over the next few centuries, more taxes were levied and friction between the merchants and royalty grew. Before long these institutions became two polarized and mutually hostile camps, though sheer need for survival kept them from using their diminishing resources to fight one another.

Untrustworthy of any and all outsiders, the ruling family fell to intermarriage, and in no time produced a series of incompetent successors quite incapable of making simple decisions, let alone running a city. As a sad backdrop to these ongoing political developments, the canals Thymiamata depended on for contact with the rest of the planet dried up or fell into disrepair.

The Straw That Broke the Camel's Back: The records of the city and many private scholars point to a draconian tax, imposed some 600 years ago, as the turning point in this chaotic time (the actual name for this period in Old Chrysean is *Lashnaashak*, which translates literally as "the time of chaos" or "the chaotic years"). Sources conflict as to the exact nature of the tax (and the translation is complicated by the metaphoric nature of the phraseology), some saying it required the merchants to give up their firstborn children, others that it demanded all taxes to be paid in blood—in any case, the tax was something completely unacceptable.

The merchant families refused the tax, as well as all others then in effect, on the grounds that the family no longer had any clear authority from Seldon. The king sent in elements of his army, now weak from years of corruption, desertion and attrition, only to have it defeated in a pitched battle with the combined private armies of the merchant families. A civil war of sorts ensued for about as month, as the royal army and clan mercenaries ravaged vast portions of the city hunting each other down and laying siege to one another's fortifications. In the end, the king was defeated and bloodily butchered by a mob of angry citizens. The days of royalty in the city were at an end.

Chaos Years: A number of confusing years followed as the victorious families struggled (using political maneuvering and in-fighting) with each other for control of the city. Eventually a government was formed that represented the families, but was extended to include the artisan guilds as well when it was realized that their services would be needed to rebuild the city. The finances for the new government were provided for by "appropriating" the deposed king's treasury and reasonable taxes were implemented, but these funds were nowhere near what was needed to resurrect the five dead canals that had dried up over the centuries. As if that weren't enough, whole portions of the city were devastated by the civil war, and what artillery fire did not finish, subsequent looting and fires did.

Reconstruction: Through decades of hard work, the new government was able to put Thymiamata on its feet again to some degree. The two remaining working canals were repaired. This allowed for trade to go on with the cities of Hyoraotes and Aram. Later, other cities along the canal networks were recontacted and opened for trade. The dead canals were useless for any kind of barge traffic but were still useful as roads, so caravans began carrying Thymiamatan finished goods to the cities of Oxia, Argus and even distant Dinsoor. Damage to Thymiamata was such that complete restoration of the pre-civil war city was all but impossible, but an ambitious public works project allowed for many of the more valuable buildings to be saved.

Though only a shadow of its former self, Thymiamata has now recovered to the extent that it once again plays an important part in the economic life of Chryse area, and even in the wealthy and prosperous Mare Erythraeum basin as well. The knack for business shown by most Thymiamatans and their largely free-market economy is what made the city the perfect place for the Americans to settle when they began arriving in 1876.

The brutes had formidable numbers, and one good coordinated attack would have no doubt destroyed the small US force, but the Americans simply lucked out. The High Martian kings did not trust one another, and while they would verbally throw their support into the idea of crushing the funny red men in blue uniforms, no king was willing to commit too many warriors on a plan for fear the others would move in on him. The result was a pathetic series of uncoordinated attacks which were quite literally blown out of the air by Forrester's new Maxim machineguns and 12-pound breech-loading cannons. Witnessing these defeats, the Thymiamatans grew brave enough to refuse tribute as well, and soon the brutes were left with no terror-based income at all.

King Kurge: Perhaps the most powerful, and certainly the most verbal, of the kings was a savage named Kurge. This barbarian ruler benefited greatly from caravan traffic along the Thymiamata-Oxia dry canal, but also enjoyed the fruits of his slave-worked silver mines and liftwood groves. His attacks (anyone else might call them harassing raids) were beaten off time and again, but unlike the smaller kings, Kurge refused to stop.

The good colonel's new scout unit was able to locate Kurge's kraag, enabling the soldiers to escalate the war early on. In a night action that is sure to be written into the history books, Forrester and a group of volunteers took a pair of disassembled mountain howitzers up into the mountains undetected, assembled them within three miles of the mountain fortress and began firing shells at it. The damage was not very extensive, but it held Kurge up as weak in the eyes of his subjects, and led more than one kraag warrior to have second thoughts about attacking the US Army again.

In a poorly considered, rage-motivated attempt at self-redemption, Kurge has recently decided to attack other nearby kraags and defeat them to regain status in the eyes of his followers. The other kings have proved far stronger than Kurge thought, however, and now a massive, confusing war is ensuing as the respective High Martian warlords battle each other for control of whatever they can find as a reasonable excuse to fight. To make matters worse, many of Kurge's subchiefs have decided to rebel against the once-mighty king, further complicating the situation. To add insult to injury, the Americans have started organizing poaching parties for liftwood into Kurge's liftwood groves, and a few of the larger mining companies have started mining the once-frightening hills for silver.

State of Affairs: The current state of affairs benefits everyone but the savages: The US Army has created a positive image for itself and America in general by "defeating" the High Martians, the economy of the city has had one major barrier to prosperity removed, and kraags that once boasted of great wealth and invulnerability are disorganized, disillusioned and paranoid.

Attacks on traffic anywhere in the Chryse area are far from unheard of, but as a general rule, attacks from High Martians on merchant traffic are up, and caravans carrying or using modern weapons seem to be the favored target—perhaps indicative of the desperate situation many of the kings are in. Most large parties are usually left alone, though, if there is no evidence they have cargo (i.e. loaded wagons, crates displayed on deck and so forth). Patrols of cavalry from the Thymiamatan defense force are not as frequent as most people would like, but still provide a measure of protection to

travelers fortunate enough to run into them. Bandits of both Martian and human extraction have been reported waylaying small, lightly armed groups (but specifics and confirmation of such attacks have proved difficult to elicit or confirm).

One fact that scares out-of-towners, especially British subjects who have dealt with the High Martians of Kraag Barrovaar, is the large number of modern weapons the beastmen of the Chryse Range have acquired ("Gäd, they're a bad enough lot with spears and the like, but here they have Winchesters?"). But this situation is really not as bad as it is rumored to be. True, many weapons have found their way into High Martian hands, but most are used to fight other High Martians in the ongoing chaos the beastmen refer to as the Kraag War. Perhaps as an added plus, the High Martians do not seem to have grasped the concept of preventative maintenance yet, so the breakdown rate of what modern weapons they have acquired is extremely high. Evidence of this was photographed by the well-known Clancy Silver Expedition earlier this year. Clancy and his men found no silver, but came across a pile of dozens of Winchester, Remington and Colt small arms rusting at the bottom of a steep canyon—apparently thrown there by High Martians who considered them no longer functional.

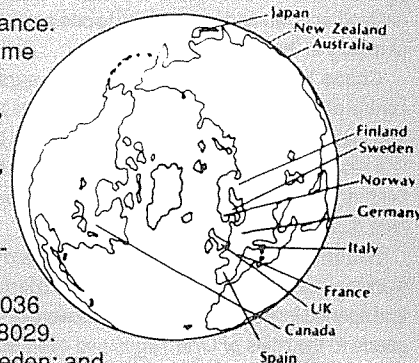
Thymiamata is dangerous, as is the surrounding countryside, but it provides the Americans a chance to expand where the frontier of the West left off. PCs need not look for trouble—sooner or later, it will find them. Ω

Don't miss part 2 of "Thymiamata: 1889" in Challenge 50. Special thanks to Damon D. Aske for his work on the design of the city map.

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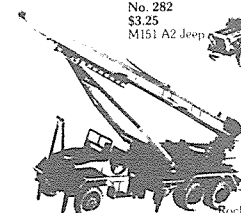
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Operation Back Door

Episode 1: Cat's Feet or Catspaw?

By Charles E. Gannon

A four-episode adventure set shortly after the last phase of the Kafer offensive into human space mounted by *Triumphant Destiny*. Although the Kafer suzerain was killed, humanity is sure the Kafers will be back.

For 3-6 free-lance PCs with diverse skills (all should have some Ship Operations skill).

This adventure begins on November 30, 2302. The Kafers were resoundingly defeated at the Battle of Beowulf (Queen Alice's Star) about four months ago (see *Invasion*). Since then, as a tired and unnerved humanity has regrouped and studied the events of the Kafer conflict, dissatisfaction with the de facto French leadership has been growing in most nations. Only a few months ago, the overall military command structure was shaken up from top to bottom. British Admiral Charles Graham is now in overall command.

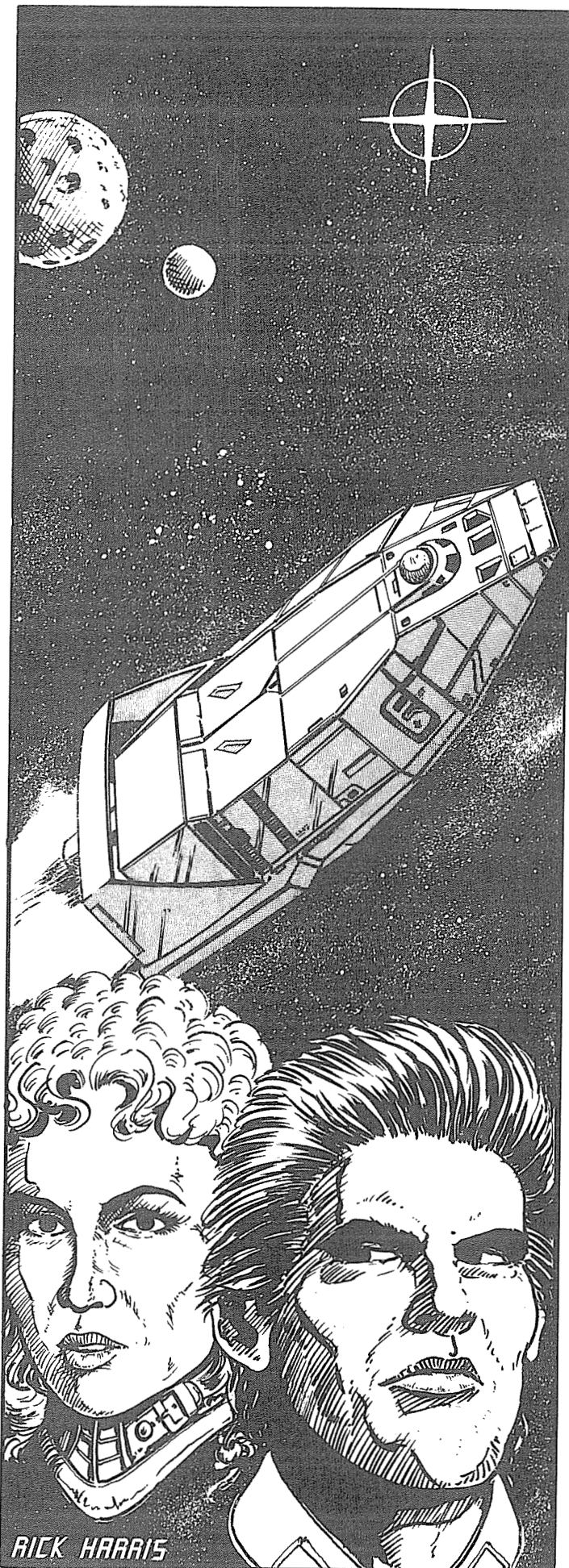
The most decorated and daring units of the Kafer War were Germans, Americans, and Australians, whose contributions to humanity's narrow victory were much weightier than the forces these nations had been able to commit to the fray. In many cases, such as at Alderhorst and Tithonus, the units of these nations had provided shining, and rare, examples of international cooperation in repulsing the Kafers.

These battle-forged bonds were not forgotten in the ensuing months. American, German, and Australian commanders continued to work together, share intelligence, and look for opportunities that emphasized joint operations. The AAEC's (Australian-American Exploratory Council) confidential discovery of the brown dwarf BD-111 094307 in late September 2302 laid just such an opportunity on the collective doorstep of these three new allies.

IN THROUGH THE BACK DOOR

On September 23, 2302, famed Australian astronomer Helen Asweath discovered evidence of a brown dwarf in a fairly barren region of space just beyond the American Arm. However, the strategic initiative made possible by the position of her find—BD (Brown Dwarf)—111 094307—sent a shock wave through the command staffs of America, Germany, and Australia. BD-111 094307's astrographic location offered units from the American Arm a path enabling them to end-run the current French Arm salient of the Kafer conflict. Instead, units using the route that passed through BD-111 094307 could enter the rear flank of suspected Kafer space by emerging at system SS-27 6854. This attack from the rear option helped to give BD-111 094307 its lasting nickname—it was indeed the back door into Kafer space.

The stir created by the discovery of Back Door was strong enough



to prompt a series of secret meetings that resulted in the formal declaration of an alliance between America, Australia, and Germany (dubbed the Alderhorst Alliance by the press). The leaders of the member nations quickly appointed an integrated command staff to explore the strategic opportunities afforded by the (as of yet undisclosed) discovery of BD-111 094307.

Non-Kafers on Kafer Ships: It was at the first meeting of this integrated command staff that AIA (American Intelligence Agency) Deputy Director Shamus Larkin started the morning with yet another information bombshell. AIA forensics experts had just discovered, along with their counterparts from Britain's MI-5, signs of a non-Kafer species on board the wreckage of an *Improved Alpha*-class battleship that had been battered into nonfunctioning junk at the Battle of Beowulf.

The clues recovered were fairly sparse, mostly food and body tissue that had literally been disincorporated by explosions and drilled into nearby plastic components. As fragmentary as the evidence was, however, it was tremendously enlightening. Of particular interest was the fact that neither the food nor the cellular material had any similarity to Kafer biology. Nor did it resemble the general biochemical composition of any organic materials that had ever been discovered with Kafers previously.

The food was discovered to be some sort of protein and vitamin-enriched vegetable paste—hardly Kafer fare. Lastly, the remains were discovered in two areas that had no control panels or weapons. Instead, from what the naval architects could infer from the wreck's overall layout, the sites where the alien remains were discovered were probably accessways to key computer or electronic control junctions.

Mystery Race: Speculation immediately centered on the existence of a mystery race which served the Kafers in some technical capacity. Analysts pointed out that Kafer supercomputers (and Kafer computers in general) were not consistent with the rest of their technology. Kafer equipment was known for being brutish, rugged, and effective, but it could hardly be considered of sophisticated or elegant design. And that was how human computer experts viewed the Kafer computers. It didn't add up. However, if the Kafers had enslaved, or worse yet, were allied to, a more advanced civilization, a fusion of the two races' technologies might indeed produce the results that had been puzzling human analysts for some time.

It was doubted that the mystery race was allied to the Kafers in a coequal sense. Kafer rejection of cooperation with non-Kafers was a well-documented fact. However, there was no guarantee either that the mystery race would be a willing, or even grudging, ally with humanity. It was altogether possible that it now lived only to serve and help its brutal and fearsome Kafer overlords.

The nations of the Alderhorst Alliance immediately made their combined discoveries of Back Door and the mystery race known to the heads of other nations. The rest of the world's leaders tended to agree with the analysis of the Alderhorst Alliance, but counseled those nations not to open a second front using the back door—not without a global consensus. However, it was also felt that more information was needed regarding the mystery race and that Back Door offered the ideal way to attempt to scout it out.

The heads of the Alderhorst Alliance's member nations responded that no second front was under consideration currently, but that they had appropriate assets on site and the area could be considered secure. The time had come for a scouting mission through Back Door.

WHY US?

Where: Orbital Port Complex, DMK+5 3409.

What: Job offer for participation in Operation Back Door.

The characters should be in (or near) system DM+5 3409 at the start of this adventure. Once in system, they will be requested to meet with a Mr. Larkin on the small orbital port complex that orbits

the tidally locked main world of Erie.

Once there, the PCs will be ushered past a number of security checkpoints to meet with a man who introduces himself as

Commodore Shamus Larkin. In actuality, this man is the AIA Deputy Director in charge of security for Operation Back Door. However, he and his agents are posing as naval security specialists in order to prevent giving the operation a high-importance intelligence profile by overtly admitting that the AIA is involved.

Larkin (a description can be found at the end of this section) will apologize for the mysterious summons and express genuine appreciation for the characters' willingness to comply. Larkin will remark that he came across the group's dossiers while searching for locally available troubleshooters. He made special note of the party's credentials—credentials which make its members excellent candidates for an upcoming job that Larkin is currently hiring for.

If the characters express interest, Larkin will inform them that if he continues to divulge information, the PCs will either have to agree to lead the mission he's outfitting or remain in protective naval custody for a couple of months in order to ensure the continued confidentiality of the mission. Larkin will also mention that part of the pay for leading the mission would be the title of the ship that is going to be used to conduct it. After hearing this, the characters should be fully committed to hear the rest of what Larkin has to say.

Larkin will go on to tell the group about the brown dwarf known as Back Door and the strategic significance of its location. He will also reveal that this substellar object was recently discovered independently by an Australian astronomer working in conjunction with the AAEC's Inter-System Baseline Interferometry Program.

Next, he will tell the PCs about the discoveries having to do with the mystery race, and how the Kafers may in some way be dependent upon this probably enslaved species. Larkin points out the need to explore the usability of the back door into Kafer space and the strategic potential of the mystery race—which might be interested in an alliance with humanity. This, he explains, led America, Australia, and Germany to decide that a joint operation was in order, code-named Back Door.

Mission Objectives: The mission's objectives are really quite simple: trailblaze the path into Kafer space, take a quick look, and then come back to report. If asked why the armed forces of these nations aren't conducting the operation, Larkin will explain that the militaries of the three involved countries are still mostly unaware of Operation Back Door. By using civilian operatives (i.e., the characters) and nonmilitary vessels, the navy (actually, the AIA) hopes to keep the operation as sanitary as possible.

Mission Profile: The mission's profile is as simple as its objectives. First, the group will meet with the other members of the mission team and get acquainted with the vessel they've all been assigned. Next, the entire team will travel to DM-4 4225, using a stutterwarp tug assist to cross the 8.286 light-year distance. At this point, the ship will be refueled by naval elements already in that system and then continue onto L-989-20, where it is advised that it refuel using native materials such as Jovian hydrogen or comets. The next stop is then Back Door itself, lying at xyz stellar coordinates -9.0, -43.4, -7.0.

The team will deploy a variety of orbital sensors, cache a recording of the entirety of the mission log at that point, and once again conduct frontier refueling. The last stop on the trip will be a cautious step into what may very well be Kafer space—system SS 27 6854. Here, the team is simply to look around to the degree that it seems prudent. It will then retrace its steps back to system DM-4 3409, where it will be debriefed during a precautionary

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quarantine.

Larkin points out that the team has a lot of latitude within these objectives and procedures. For instance, if things in system SS-27 6854 look interesting, particularly if there might be a possibility to gather data on the mystery race, then the team can opt to stay on site and continue its reconnaissance. While it will not be essential to refuel at every system, Larkin strongly recommends it. Frontier refueling takes quite a bit of time, and if the team bumps into some unfriendlies, it will help to have already full tanks.

Danger Quotient and Payoff: Larkin will be completely honest about the potential dangers of the mission. He will also be quite frank regarding how lucrative the payoff he's offering—a fast hull, good cash (Lv10,000 per person), and plenty of fame (two to three renown points) for all, once the operation and its results are declassified.

Once the characters accept the offer, Larkin will be able to provide clearances for any questionable or restricted equipment that the characters might have (and wish to take along). He will also be able to fill any reasonable equipment requests, although no heavy combat gear is deemed necessary. As soon as it's ready, Larkin will take the group on a guided tour of the ship it'll be using for the mission, a *Merkur IIb* named *Cat's Feet*.

About Shamus Larkin

Shamus Larkin is an Elite NPC. He is a deputy director in the American Intelligence Agency (which will be covered in depth in the third episode of this adventure). Larkin is 52, in fine shape, and one of the keenest minds in the American intelligence community.

As overseer of security for Operation Back Door, Larkin's powers are unusually broad. Along with his direct superiors in the AIA and the American Space Forces (as well as their counterparts in the German and Australian services), Larkin is one of the less than 50 people who are aware of all the details of the mission.

There is one major fact that Larkin has not revealed to the characters—one of the NPC crew that the PCs will be in command of is actually an undercover AIA agent. This individual, Morgan Lindstrom, is not on the mission to control, manipulate, or spy upon the PCs. His primary task is to make sure that no one does anything excessively stupid and that the essential scientific personnel on the mission survive to conduct their studies and make their reports.

MERKUR IIB

The *Merkur IIb* is a joint German-American modification of a military variant of the commercial *Merkur* design (data appeared in ***Ships of the French Arm***). While the German all-military variant (the *Ila*) retains a somewhat secret status, the *Iib* is designed to meet

Fuel Purification

As players (and referees) of both **2300 AD** and **Star Cruiser** may be aware, there is a discrepancy between the two rules sets insofar as the ratings and requirements of fuel purification systems are concerned. In order to resolve this, the following compromise is suggested:

As per **2300 AD**, each fuel cracking plant requires one solar array to power it, not the 10 solar arrays required by **Star Cruiser**. Also, each purifier produces one ton of fuel every eight hours, not every 10 hours (which the rate delineated by **Star Cruiser**). This produces a weekly output from a single continuously operating plant of 21 tons of fuel (an even three per day), which falls fairly close to the 23 tons per week listed in **2300 AD**.

However, when making mass and volume allowances for the purification plant, be sure to add on the volume and weight of the solar array separately.

a number of wants that had heretofore been considered difficult, perhaps impossible, to deliver in a single hull.

The Kafer War has engendered a growing perception that there is an increased risk (and therefore, cost) connected with exploration. Consequently, interstellar trailblazing has largely become a corporate or foundation venture. Over the years, survey vessels have shown a steady increase in size and specialization. The only organizations that could afford to own and operate them were the organizations that could directly or indirectly profit from any discoveries made by such vessels.

Unfortunately, along with the support of big business came the conservatism of big business. The German government, in cooperation with the AAEC, found a way to solve this dilemma—the *Merkur IIb*. By giving it a laser turret, a missile tube and bay (which can also be used for deploying independent sensor platforms), and an integral fuel-cracking capability, the German-American design team produced a vessel of modestly increased price and vastly increased exploratory potential in a high-threat environment.

It can hardly be denied that the *Merkur IIb* has significant failings. With the crew complement cut to 11, the captain/sensor work station and computer/gunnery work station must be left unmanned during the "night" watch. While these stations do not generally need constant manning, this situation does reduce the crew's ability to respond with optimum speed and efficiency if surprised during this watch. The addition of the Hyde Dynamics EA-122 laser in a masked turret gives the *Merkur IIb* a little bite, but use of the weapon steals power from the stutterwarp drive. When firing the laser, the ship's warp efficiency is reduced to 2.57 (move of 5, in terms of **Star Cruiser** ratings). And of course, the low-comfort, spinless quarters are as unappealing as ever.

However, although the *Merkur IIb* does no one thing very well, it does reopen the gates for cursory small-team exploration of potentially hazardous systems. The fuel-cracking plant can completely refuel the vessel in about 19 days. While this might seem like a long layover, the effective range of 7.7 LY suggests a maximum of about 2.5 days of operation between system stops. This is equal to approximately 130 tons of fuel or, about 6.5 days of fuel processing, a perfect stopover period in a new system that's being given a quick once-over.

In short, the *Merkur IIb* facilitates the more aggressive exploratory style of the nations of the Alderhorst Alliance.

Sensor Package: Standard cartographic, advanced cartographic, advanced life, passive and active sensors.

Crew: Bridge: 5, Engineering: 3

General Information: *Warp Efficiency:* 2.83 *Plant:* 4 MW MHD *Turbine Fuel:* 400 tons, sufficient for 1 week of operation *Range:* 7.7 LY *Mass:* 732.6 tons *Cargo Capacity:* 40 m³ (restricted to a mass of 10 tons if stated performance is to be retained) **Comfort:** -2 **Emergency Power:** None **Total Life Support:** 11 **Solar Array:** 700 m² (seven arrays), primarily for the support of seven on-board fuel processors **Price:** ? (Lv18,140,000)

CAT'S FEET

In addition to the specifications listed above for the *Merkur IIb* class, the *Cat's Feet* is already loaded with 3 SIM-14 missiles, extra provisions, and a number of automated sensor packages that the team is to drop off at sites of interest. It also carries a wide array of scientific material for sample-taking and analysis, as well as boxes of spare parts for various ship's systems. Larkin will inform the group members that any special equipment requests they might have made earlier will be unloaded when they rendezvous with the tug that will take them out-system.

The referee is to determine what material has been requested by the NPC team members. Such requests should be minimal.

There is room on the mission for up to six PCs. Given the slots filled by the NPCs, the open positions are captain (1, single shift),

engineer (1), communications officer (1), pilot/navigator (1), helmsman (1) and gunner/remote operator (1, single shift). Those positions noted as being "single shift" indicate that there is no room to carry a "second shift" crewmember for this position. This means that during the off shift, the bridge is without a captain or a gunner. *Cat's Feet* should play it safe during its off shift.

In the likely event that there are fewer than six PCs, simply generate more NPCs for inclusion in the crew. The NPCs must be of Australian, German, or American nationality. Also, if the PCs have skills that needlessly duplicate the primary mission skills of one or more NPCs, simply change the NPCs' redundant mission skill to a mission skill which is currently lacking.

After their tour of the ship, Larkin will escort the group to a large, private lounge on the uppermost level of the orbital port facility, where the rest of the team for Operation Back Door is waiting.

NPC BACK DOOR TEAM MEMBERS

The following are the first impressions that the PCs will receive of their NPC teammates. This introductory conversation begins in the lounge, but will continue over dinner. It will begin to break up with Helen excusing herself, claiming what seems to be genuine fatigue, and the rest of the gathering will leave pretty quickly after that. In-depth NPC descriptions follow, for the referee's benefit.

Helen Asweath: Helen Asweath, the Australian astronomer who discovered Back Door, comes across as a somewhat shy person who seems ill-at-ease with so many people. Any of the characters who have exploration or astronomy backgrounds will know her name instantly: Helen is a famous author and lecturer on her topic. Indeed, if the conversation gets around to Back Door or anything related to stellar objects, Helen will immediately brighten, her animation and enthusiasm suddenly overcoming her reclusive demeanor.

Morgan Lindstrom: Morgan Lindstrom, an American drive specialist (actually, an AIA undercover operative), will introduce himself with a handshake and a broad, good-natured smile. Lindstrom is as outgoing as Helen is introverted; he'll express a polite interest in the characters and their backgrounds. If asked about himself, he will reveal that he started out with a naval commission, but left it after his first hitch was up, preferring the freer lifestyle aboard commercial vessels.

Franchot Dumaine: Franchot Dumaine, a French xenosapi-entologist, handles introductions with reserved charm. He is affable in a quiet way and will be eager to learn if any of the characters have any skills in life sciences. Finding such a common interest, he will immediately tend to gravitate toward the character(s) possessing them. He expresses the hope that the team will encounter some sign of the mystery race during its mission.

Hannelore Spitzmacher and Carson Murrough: Hannelore Spitzmacher and Carson Murrough are both recently retired naval drive specialists from the German and Australian navies, respectively. "Hannah" is direct and no-nonsense, but is otherwise pleasant to be around. Carson, who is clearly very attached to Hannah, seems to be her opposite—easygoing and soft-spoken.

NPC DOSSIERS

The following information on the five NPC crewmembers of the *Cat's Feet* is subject to modification at the discretion of the referee. However, the abilities of this group must always remain germane to the mission at hand. If the NPCs are not given distinct personalities and a substantial presence in the adventure, much of the enjoyment of Operation Back Door will be lost. If the referee finds that he cannot portray all five NPCs thoroughly, the two engineers (Hannah and Carson) can be relegated to the role of supporting cast members without damaging the essential drama. Amongst the other crewmembers, Lindstrom is the characters' undercover "ally" and Dumaine their undercover "enemy," although circumstances may definitely make the reverse appear true at some points in the adventure (wherein lies half the fun!).

Helen Asweath

Position: Communications/astrophysics
Nationality: Australian
Homeworld: King
Gravity: High Frontier/

2300AD

Core: Frontier *Looks and Gender:* Plain female *Birthdate:* June 6, 2270 *Mass:* 86kg *Eyesight:* Excellent *Hearing:* Poor *Body Type:* Normal *Throw Range:* 32 m *Coolness:* 6 *Encumbrance:* 32 *Native Language:* English *Other Languages:* German *Size:* 12 *Strength:* 8 *Dexterity:* 8 *Endurance:* 5 *Determination:* 12 *Intelligence:* 14 *Eloquence:* 17 *Education:* 17 *Consciousness:* 4 *Life Level:* 8 *Careers:* Ship's Crew, Astronomer (Academic).

Skills: Computer-4, Information Gathering-3, Bureaucracy-1, Ground Vehicle-1, Communication-3, Remote Pilot-2, Pilot-1, Ship's Drives-1, Melee-1, Survival-1, P-Suit-1, Sensors-2, Writing-1, Astronomy-6.

Helen Asweath's life is astronomy and astrophysics. Plagued by a body that never fully adapted to the rigors of King's awful gravity and opportunistic childhood illnesses (one of which impaired her hearing significantly), Helen turned to intellectual pursuits at an early age. Her love of the stars and of new horizons of knowledge may have had some roots in subconscious escapism, but by the time she was 16, it was clear that she had a tremendous ability in astronomy and astrophysics. Guided by an almost spooky instinct that she simply shrugs off as good guessing, Helen has racked up an impressive list of first finds and garnered a prestigious advisory position on the astronomy planning board that set the mission agenda for the Bayern. In the years since, she has made a nice living teaching, writing, and lecturing about the wonders of the heavens.

It came as no surprise to the AAEC when Helen notified them of her tentative discovery of BD-111 094307: If anyone was capable of finding brown dwarfs, it was she. But it was a huge surprise for Helen when the first response to her discovery was a visit from four very serious men from the AIA who politely but firmly insisted that she accompany them to "more secure living arrangements."

Alternating between shock and disgruntlement, Helen's grudging cooperation became whole-hearted and joyous when she learned several days later that the AIA and her government were both asking her to consent to being on the first exploratory team being sent to Back Door.

NPC Motivations: *Heart 9:* Helen's unpopularity as a sickly, overweight child has made her very sensitive and sympathetic to the pain and difficulties of other people. She abhors (with uncharacteristic vehemence) cruelty and deceit, and can exhibit extraordinary personal courage when trying to defend others. *Diamond 3:* Helen also has learned hard lessons about medical costs, owing to the chronic problems that developed during her earliest years on King. She is consequently an assiduous saver and keeps one eye on the bottom line at all times.

Morgan Lindstrom

Position: Helm (AIAoperative) *Nationality:* American *Homeworld:* Tirane *Gravity:* Normal *Frontier/Core:* Core *Looks and Gender:* Good-looking male *Birthdate:* April 7, 2267 *Mass:* 89 kg *Eyesight:* Exceptional *Hearing:* Average *Body Type:* Normal *Throw Range:* 96 m *Coolness:* 10 *Encumbrance:* 50 *Native Language:* English *Other Languages:* French *Size:* 13 *Strength:* 12 *Dexterity:* 14 *Endurance:* 14 *Determination:* 18 *Intelligence:* 13 *Eloquence:* 13 *Education:* 17 *Consciousness:* 4 *Life Level:* 8 *Careers:* AIA Field Agent, AIA Law Enforcement (with OFO).

Skills: Information Gathering-4, First Aid-2, Electronics-2, Computer-5, Forgery-1, Sidearm-5, Melee-2, Bureaucrat-1, Stealth-2, Ship's Drives-2, P-Suit-1, Interview-1, Ground Vehicle-2, Psychol-

ogy-1, Hovercraft-1, Tracking-2, Survival-2.

Special Equipment: 1 S & W ISP 106 with six loaded magazines of ammunition. See the next episode for details.

Morgan's history reads almost too much like the all-American success story: athletic, boyish good looks, excellent student, outgoing and affable—and of course, patriotic. Morgan has been with the AIA since he was 20, and while no longer bright-eyed and ingenuous, he has retained his ideals and deep sense of concern for the fate of America and humanity as a whole.

Morgan was a natural choice for the Back Door mission and his familiarity with computers and drives qualified him for a spot at the helm—where he could keep an eye on the crew. He will have been fully briefed on the PCs and NPCs, although his information does not mention that Franchot Dumaine is a Tricolor agent.

NPC Motivations: *Spade Ace:* Morgan's easy manner also makes him very easy to trust, particularly in combination with his common sense and unflappability in the face of a crisis. He will pointedly reinforce the PCs' position as the mission's leaders, but when he has a suggestion to make, the NPCs will listen closely and generally agree (with the possible exception of Dumaine). *Club 3:* Morgan is not a violent man, but he has been in his share of firefights and is not afraid of another one. However, his easy relationship with violence also means that he will approach it rationally and not get into fights he doesn't have to get into. He will attempt to steer others away from violence until and unless it seems the only effective course of action.

Franchot Dumaine

Position: 2nd pilot/xenosapienologist **Nationality:** French **Homeworld:** L-5 substation **Gravity:** Low **Frontier/Core:** Core **Looks and Gender:** Excellent-looking male **Birthdate:** May 1, 2266 **Mass:** 92 kg **Eyesight:** Average **Hearing:** Average **Body Type:** Normal **Throw Range:** 112 m **Coolness:** 5 **Encumbrance:** 56 **Native Language:** French **Other Languages:** English **Size:** 14 **Strength:** 14 **Dexterity:** 13 **Endurance:** 11 **Determination:** 19 **Intelligence:** 9 **Eloquence:** 15 **Education:** 13 **Consciousness:** 4 **Life Level:** 9 **Careers:** Xenologist (Biologist), Field Agent (for Tricolor).

Skills: Computer-2, Information Gathering-4, Bureaucracy-1, Biology-6, Anthropology-2, Writing-1, Streetwise-1, Forgery-1, Sidearm-1, Melee-1, Stealth-1, Security Systems-4, Pilot-2, Electronics-1

Franchot Dumaine is one of IEX's best field experts in xenobiology, and he has an impressive record in decoding the interplay between physiology and culture in the Sung, and most recently, the Kafers. However, Dumaine is also a secret ultranationalist who became an informer and field agent for Tricolor six years ago. Embittered by the way in which the bright successes of the Kafer War kept eluding France, Dumaine began to dabble in extremist politics. He attracted the attention of a Tricolor agent who slowly recruited the disheartened scientist into the ranks of this dangerously fanatic organization.

In many ways, Dumaine has been ripe for such a picking for some time. More a tireless worker than a brilliant mind, Franchot has spent the last 10 years resenting the unfailing tendency of the media

limelight to prefer geniuses over dedicated, highly competent workers (such as himself). His dedication and precision began to turn into an almost neurotic fastidiousness, even as his ardent patriotism changed into a desire for vengeance upon other nations. However, Dumaine still believes in what he is doing, and can be both charming and convincing. His extraordinary good looks and silver tongue often allow him to manipulate members of the opposite sex without their being aware of it. Dumaine knows that Morgan Lindstrom is with the AIA; Tricolor activated the one mole it had in that agency in order to learn about the AIA's role in Operation Back Door. Similarly, Dumaine's appointment to the mission team was accomplished by Tricolor string-pulling.

NPC Motivations: *Heart 3:* Dumaine is a fairly nice fellow, and his charm and (now intermittent) warmth are quite genuine. *Spade Queen:* Unfortunately, his amiability and helpfulness are completely subordinate to his duty as a Tricolor agent. He will do anything to accomplish his mission. There is an obvious conflict between his innate prosocial tendencies and this absolute ruthlessness. If under constant stress, the emotional fatigue caused by living with these conflicting drives may begin to show up as excessive or even hysterical behavior and sudden (perhaps dangerous) mood swings.

About Tricolor: Tricolor is a secret organization of French ultranationalists. It is dedicated to ensuring that France rises to true superpower status once again and retains absolute dominance over human affairs. Not surprisingly, Tricolor wants to make sure that Operation Back Door benefits France more than it does the nations of the Alderhorst Alliance (American, Australia, and Germany). A much more detailed background will be given on Tricolor in the final episode of this adventure. Here, the referee only needs to know that Tricolor is, thus far, a completely unknown organization, and that its agents and directors are ruthless fanatics.

Hannelore Spitzmacher

Position: Engineer **Nationality:** German **Homeworld:** Beta Canum Venaticorum **Gravity:** Normal **Frontier/Core:** Frontier **Looks and Gender:** Good-looking female **Birthdate:** July 6, 2253 **Mass:** 78 kg **Eyesight:** Average **Hearing:** Excellent **Body Type:** Normal **Throw Range:** 80 m **Coolness:** 10 **Encumbrance:** 40 **Native Language:** German **Other Languages:** English **Size:** 10 **Strength:** 10 **Dexterity:** 12 **Endurance:** 8 **Determination:** 12 **Intelligence:** 11 **Eloquence:** 4 **Education:** 13 **Consciousness:** 4 **Life Level:** 8 **Careers:** Ground Military, Space Military.

Skills: Streetwise-1, Swimming-1, Trader-1, Mechanic-3, Electronics-4, Computer-2, First Aid-1, Appraisal-1, Combat Rifle-2, Heavy Weapons-1, Melee-2, Ground Vehicle-1, Demolitions-1, Survival-1, P-Suit-2, Hovercraft-1, Sidearm-1, Prospecting-1, Aircraft Pilot-2, Ship's Drives-7, Communications-3, Gunner-1.

"Hannah" Spitzmacher is a no-nonsense career military type who has seen combat in the Kafer conflict, and before that, in the War of German Reunification. However, after the Battle of Beowulf, she decided she had had enough of the military life, particularly when the pitiless vacuum of deep space was just on the other side of the thinly armored hulls that she called home. She began the process of getting out. The German command learned of Hannah's intentions, as well as her hope of making a living as a trader with her longtime friend and intimate, Carson Murrough. Hannah's rather improbable hope became a reality when German officers guaranteed her 30% shares in a hull if, upon retiring, she undertook one voluntary mission as a specialist. That mission was Operation Back Door. Hannah snapped up the offer without a moment's delay.

NPC Motivations: *Spade Queen:* Hannah is as mulish as they come and right now, that means that she is absolutely dedicated to making sure that Operation Back Door succeeds. She wants her shares in a commercial starship, this mission is how she's going to get them, and that is that. *Spade 6:* Hannah is not interested in leading, but if others won't or can't, she will take charge and give the orders. Indecisiveness is not one of her problems.

Icebreaker

An icebreaker is cyberslang for a handsized expert system that can be hooked up to a simple computer to assist with the cracking of any security codes that might be protecting the system. In essence, icebreakers are very sophisticated random number generators combined with an expert system that uses safecracking logic to defeat multipart locks. Icebreakers are generally used to overcome simple combination locks, code word restrictions, etc. When using an icebreaker to assist with such a task, decrease the difficulty of that task by one level. **Price:** Lv250 and up **Mass:** 0.75 kg and up.

Carson Murrough

Position: Engineer **Nationality:** Australian **Homeworld:** Earth **Gravity:** Normal **Frontier/Core:** Core **Looks and Gender:** Good-looking male **Birthdate:** February 4, 2253 **Mass:** 80 kg **Eyesight:** Average **Hearing:** Average **Body Type:** Normal **Throw Range:** 80 m **Coolness:** 9 **Encumbrance:** 40 **Native Language:** English **Other Languages:** German **Size:** 10 **Strength:** 10 **Dexterity:** 13 **Endurance:** 9 **Determination:** 12 **Intelligence:** 12 **Eloquence:** 8 **Education:** 13 **Consciousness:** 4 **Life Level:** 8 **Careers:** Ground Military, Space Military.

Skills: Swimming-1, Mechanic-3, Electronics-4, Computer-2, First Aid-2, Appraisal-1, Combat Rifle-2, Heavy Weapons-1, Melee-3, Survival-1, P-Suit-2, Hovercraft-2, Sidearm-1, Prospecting-1, Aircraft Pilot-2, Ship's Drives-7, Communications-3, Pilot-1, Remote Pilot-1.

Carson Murrough grew up on an outback robot farm with nothing but time and open space on his hands, and the attitude engendered by that atmosphere is still with Carson today. Whereas his longtime companion Hannelore Spitzmacher is intensely goal-oriented and energetic, Carson is easygoing and relaxed. Carson is an Australian veteran who saw a small amount of action in the Kafer War. Upon hitting 50, he decided it was time to leave the service, prompting Hannah to think similar thoughts. Carson likes her idea of their becoming part owners in a ship, although in all truth, he would have been just as happy raising sheep or fixing broken engines. However, as always, Carson is willing to follow Hannah's lead, particularly in light of the fact that he too has been offered a 30% share in a hull.

NPC Motivations: *Heart 3:* Carson is truly amiable and cooperative, but will not do anything that is contrary to his considerable conscience. *Club 9:* Carson also likes a little bit of excitement now and again, even though he won't actively seek it out. He was never one to turn down an offer to spar. Nor is he likely to try to talk a bully out of a confrontation. Carson will just smile and put the jerk's lights out.

A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS

Where: En route to and in system DM-4 4225.

What: Witnessing the interstellar tug assist and refueling.

Early the next day, the entire team will be awakened by Larkin, who hands them a packet containing communication code words and all known data on the different systems they are about to enter. Beyond their next destination (DM-4 4225) that data amounts to broad hypotheses, guesswork, and academic doubletalk, which all boils down to "we haven't got a clue." In accordance with the enclosed instructions, the group will take the *Cat's Feet* into the outer system, where it will wait for a rendezvous with an unspecified ship.

And wait it does. Four hours go by before a *Hudson*-class transport shows up. Communication is audio only, and all references are by the code words provided via Larkin's packet.

The *Hudson*-class vessel is unmarked, not running a transponder or navigation radar, and begins to come very close. As the freighter continues to approach, its massive cargo bay doors swing wide, giving the characters a sudden sensation of being eaten alive by a cavernous black maw. Dumaine mutters a wry comment about feeling like Jonah meeting the whale.

The *Cat's Feet* is literally swallowed into the cargo bay, which the PCs will note has been substantially modified. Massive robotic manipulators clamp on to the ship and maneuver it toward something that looks like a huge harness. Any character with a background in fighter operations will recognize it as an overgrown version of the external slings that some fighters use to carry missiles. This sling however, is large enough for the *Cat's Feet*!

An adjacent, larger structure becomes visible as the bay's internal working lights come on. This is an even more gargantuan sling, with a (comparatively) enormous ship in it. Hannah, Carson, and Morgan (feigning a bit of uncertainty at first) will be able to identify it as a German *Sachsen*-class frigate. (Any PC with a naval background

would also be able to identify it.)

During the next three days of travel, attempts to communicate with the crew of the *Hudson*-class freighter will be discouraged in a cordial fashion. Requests to leave the *Cat's Feet* will be politely refused, and the bay is kept in vacuum. Any attempts to communicate with the frigate will be fruitless (no response).

At the end of the three days, the bay doors will once again swing wide, revealing the twinkling panorama of deep space. The huge robotic manipulators—Carson has identified them as the new American Centiherc design (the first automated cargo handler that can also be used to launch bay vessels)—once again take hold of the PCs' ship and swing it out into space. The taciturn communications officer on board the unmarked *Hudson* wishes the team well and recommends immediate transit to its destination. If the PCs can't take the hint and insist on asking if the frigate is heading to the same destination, the commo officer will politely but tersely tell them that they really don't need to know that and should proceed toward their destination without further delay. Carson will remark that everybody out here seems to enjoy what he calls the "Dr. Mysterioso act." With a chuckle, he heads aft toward the drive compartment.

Arriving at DM-4 4225: The characters have about six light-years left to travel, after which they will arrive in system DM-4 4225, where they encounter plenty of traffic—unusual for a system that can only be reached by tugs. The harbinger of this traffic hangs silent in space some 20 AU out, a massive vessel (over 40,000 tons) that Dumaine, and eventually Spitzmacher, will be able to identify as an old *Metal*-class modular freighter. The presence of this ancient French design earns a raised eyebrow from Dumaine and a respectful whistle from Morgan, who notes that this vessel, like the *Hudson*-class, is unmarked and is not running any transponder or navigation beam. Attempts at communication will meet with silence, punctuated only by the background static of cosmic rays.

As the *Cat's Feet* moves deeper in-system, the characters may be interested in some of the system data (and may swing by some of the detailed system objects), which appears below.

Helen Asweath will quickly become immersed in the scientific details of the system, taking gravimetric readings and collecting as much stellar data as her equipment permits. As the first non-government surveyor on site, the unusual features of this binary system are an academic gold mine.

As the courier draws near to Ploughshare (the world occupying orbit three in the system), the characters will be hailed by local forces. In addition to whatever else may be hiding out of sight or is lurking in the cargo modules of the *Metal*-class freighter, two American FS-17A fighters and one *Krupp 821* cargo carrier are encountered before the *Cat's Feet* is guided to a berth at a small orbital complex.

This time, both communications and debarkation are freely permitted, and some of the air of secrecy drops. Although the personnel encountered in this naval outpost don't have the exact specifics of the characters' mission, they have a pretty good idea of why the group is out here and where it's going.

If the referee desires, this would be a good place to expand the adventure into a small campaign. Dumaine, like Asweath, is the first nongovernment researcher in his speciality to enter this system. Ploughshare offers him an unparalleled opportunity for the study and sampling of a completely new biosphere. The renown and book contracts that are almost sure to result are the answer to every academicians chronic dilemma of publish or perish. Consequently, he will be eager to head down to Ploughshare (both in order to pursue this genuine opportunity and to reinforce his cover as the mission's life scientist)—but the naval commanders will not let him

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go planetside without an armed escort. And, if any of the characters are scientists, this may be a golden opportunity for them as well.

If this sidetrip isn't desired, the referee can simply have the refueling completed in a couple of hours, and send the crew of the *Cat's Feet* hurling off into the unknown that lies beyond the edge of this system.

DM-4 4225 (-8.9, -34.6, -3.2)

Stellar Type: K5 V *Absolute Magnitude:* 7.53 *Radius:* 0.59 *Mass:* 0.71 *Luminosity:* 0.08 *Temp. in Degrees K:* 4100 *Number of Orbits:* 8 (however, the outer three are occupied by dust and rubble only).

Note: Star DM-4 4226 shares identical coordinates with DM-4 4225, but it is not a binary companion. It is at a distance of 9300 AU.

Orbit	World and Core Type	Diameter	Density
1, 0.101	Hothouse, rocky	13,011	1.0
2, 0.132	Gas giant, rocky	72,551*	1.0*
3, 0.247	"Cool garden," rocky	12,044	1.0
4, 0.494	Failed core, icy	25,327	0.1
5, 0.798	Failed core, icy	14,101	0.3
6-8, —	Dust and rubble	—	—

*This gas giant's initial diameter was approximately 18,000, but was doubled twice, according to the "snowballing rule." The listed density would therefore only apply to the world's *core*.

System Overview: Astrophysicists have long been eager to journey to this system in order to study the interactions of DM-4 4225 and DM-4 4226 which are not a binary pair despite their proximity (9300 AU). The first mission, intended to scout the area before a final commitment was made to the stutterwarp tug operations, discovered that the outer three orbits of DM-4 4225 have been either disrupted or pulverized. This is sure to galvanize academic interest in this system, which may hold clues as to how binaries may either break apart, or what happens when two separate stars pass close to each other.

Planetary Overview: Regardless of the astrophysical fascination that DM-4 4225 will generate, it is sure to take a back seat to the keen political interest in the system. Not only has DM-4 4225 recently emerged as a possible gateway to Kafer space, but it has revealed itself to be the answer to American and Australian colonization dreams. The world at orbit three, tentatively dubbed Ploughshare by the Yank-Aussie crews of the ships in system, is the find that both nations have hoped for on the American Arm. Despite Ploughshare's partial (32% overall) glaciation, the rest of the planet is one of the ripest colonial plums yet discovered by humanity. Gravity is almost earth normal. The temperate zone offers a climatological range reminiscent of Maine to Georgia. Thirty-eight percent of the planet's 68% unglaciated surface is water, producing a land to ocean ratio of almost 1:1. The planet evinces luxuriant growth and a wide variety of animal life, none of which seems to contain any viruses or bacteria that would be especially lethal to terrestrial biots. In short, the discovery of Ploughshare represents a major upswing in Australian-American colonization potential and portends intensified interest in this area of space, despite the system's tug-only access.

History: The only drawback to finding Ploughshare is that both the Australian and American leaders who are now aware of the garden planet and eager to initiate precolonization studies are being forced to sit on their hands due to the confidential nature of the forces in the DM-4 4225 system and their relationship to Operation Back Door. Despite the solid commitment of the American and Australian governments to the secrecy concealing these military initiatives, there is now a major economic motivation to resolve those initiatives quickly in order to get on with more profitable colonizing ventures.

UNSCHEDULED DETOUR

Where: Near system L-989-20 (-8.9, -39.3, -1.3).

What: A mysterious system failure.

The referee should require a task roll from the on-duty navigator to see if that individual can keep the navigational system from

crashing 100%, but in fact, the outcome is inevitable—the system loses all its data and goes off-line.

The lack of a navigational system has serious repercussions. Guiding a stutterwarping vessel requires constant navigational attention. Initial navigation coordinates need constant refinement as the system grows nearer. Additionally, since the ship is not under acceleration, but is in effect travelling under pseudovelocity, one can only be sure that of travelling the desired direction by checking the current position against earlier ones. This is done by taking astrographic bearings via stellar objects after every individual stutter and comparing them to the readings which immediately preceded it the current one. This process, including the data records of the ship's bearings, is stored in and handled by a navigational subsystem referred to as the sequencer.

If the sequencer dies, and takes the previous navigational records with it, the ship is effectively lost. A new course can be plotted, but the probability of error is very high, since the new starting coordinates are only estimates. Precise information can only be obtained from extremely accurate astrographic bearings. Eventually, a ship could certainly navigate to its destination by error-averaging (the process of reducing inaccuracies by correcting and countercorrecting in ever smaller increments). However, by that time, the charge built up in the stutterwarp drives would almost surely have killed everyone off.

Helen Can Help!: The chief navigator/pilot will be faced with a Difficult task if he attempts to plot a new course from the ship's current estimated position to LL 989-20. Dumaine will remain very calm as he attempts to help with this task, but he will be sweating noticeably.

If one of the characters doesn't think of it, then Morgan or Helen will—there's an expert astronomer onboard. Given a day, Helen's skill will allow her to significantly increase the accuracy of the bearing estimation (her help reduces the above task level to Routine). If the task fails, the PCs will only be able to realize it after two days of travel, at which time they will have to let Helen take another try. This attempt will succeed (it has to if the group members are to reach LL 989-20 before the accumulated charge on the stutterwarp drive kills them).

Secret Sabotage: The one important piece of information that will not (or should not) be immediately evident to the PCs is that the trouble with the navigational sequencer was not an accident. It was caused by a self-destructing computer virus in that system, which was implanted by Franchot Dumaine. If one of the characters decides to run a systems check after the failure, Dumaine will volunteer to help out, just to make sure that his tampering is not discovered. However, if a character runs the check without informing anyone else, he has a chance of finding a telltale clue that something or someone onboard is playing deadly games with the crew of the *Cat's Feet*.

Task: To discover a clue: Formidable, Computer, 2 hours (one try only).

If the task is successful, the character will note some irregularities in the subroutine governing user access to the navigational programs. It seems as though someone "jimmied" their way into the guts of the system. This is usually impossible to do, except as authorized by the captain or XO of a ship who hold the access codes to this restricted area of the system's programming. If a saboteur were to enter the system and put a few digits in the wrong place, the calculating ability that governs the assessment of navigational bearings could be rendered useless, possibly stranding the ship in deep space. The discovering character will be able to tell that someone nevertheless managed to get into the program and plant a virus bomb that crashed the system.

If the NPCs are Confronted: If the PCs decide to confront the NPCs (which is not likely, considering the difficulty of discovering the sabotage at this point), all will deny any knowledge or involvement in such an act of sabotage. However, a search of the NPCs' stowed gear will turn up an

icebreaker in Morgan's cargo. Morgan will be (genuinely) stunned and claim that the icebreaker is not his—it was obviously planted in the luggage. The characters can believe what they will.

Dumaine will evince a quiet doubt in Morgan's story, but not engage in any direct character assassination. Such behavior could center some suspicion on Dumaine, if the characters decide to investigate the possibility that someone did plant the icebreaker in Morgan's luggage (which Dumaine of course did, in order to deflect any suspicion from himself if his sabotage was discovered).

It is important to realize that Dumaine is not suicidal: His sabotage of the navigational sequencer was not intended to strand the ship in space and defeat the mission. Instead, it was important for him to establish a sense of doubt in the reliability of the ship's guidance systems. This must be achieved so that a subsequent act of sabotage, which involves crippling the ship after the mission but before return to DM+5 3409, might be interpreted as a second and fatal failure when the ship fails to return. At this point in the adventure, Dumaine is not yet sure whether he will have to utilize this treacherous final option.

Arriving in LL 989-20: The team will arrive, somewhat nerve-racked, in system LL 989-20. Save the physical descriptions of objects for actual PC visits to those features of the system. Refueling will take some time, during which automated sensors can be deployed and their results analyzed—the PCs can be given access to the system data given below once the sensors are deployed.

Refueling: The best insystem refueling spots are on several of the second gas giant's moons, or refueling could be accomplished directly from the second Jovian's atmosphere. After completing their refueling, the crew of the *Cat's Feet* should be ready to head through the back door and into what may be Kafer space.

L 989-20 B (Secondary)

Stellar Type: MO V *Absolute Magnitude:* 11.7 *Radius:* 0.54 *Mass:* 0.48 *Luminosity:* 0.04 *Temp. in Degrees K:* 3500 *Number of Orbits:* 3

Data on the star's companion, L 989-20 A (perihelion of 10.1 AU), can be accessed directly from the appropriate tables in the **2300AD Director's Guide**. It is a classic (standard) GO VII star without planets.

Orbit	World and Core Type	Diameter	Density
1, 0.1	Gas giant, rocky	15,965	0.9
2, 0.2	Gas giant, rocky	36,023*	0.9*
3, 0.35	Empty		

*This gas giant's initial diameter was approximately 18,000, but was doubled once, according to the "snowballing rule." The listed density would therefore only apply to the world's core.

System Overview: L 989-20 is a generally unremarkable system, except for the fact that the presence here of two gas giants of different types offers some interesting military options. Planet I is a dark, cloudy world, dominated by browns and charcoals and occasional flecks of dull red. It has a proportionately massive core for a gas giant and its atmosphere is frequently veined by split-second bursts of lightning. Planet II is more diffuse, dominated by stunning reds and yellows and surrounded by a number of large moons.

History: Remote probes sent into this system three weeks ago revealed no evidence that it has ever been visited before. Both gas giants were briefly scanned (in order to ensure their usefulness as frontier refueling spots). While there has been no time to study any of planet II's many satellites, there is considerable interest in doing so, since this larger gas giant lies directly at the center of the system's life zone.

UNLOCKING THE BACK DOOR

Where: System BD-111 094307.

What: First glimpse of Back Door.

When the team arrives in the Back Door system, it will be relieved (though hardly surprised) to find that the reputed brown dwarf is

there, waiting patiently to absorb the discharge from their stutterwarp drive.

Helen will want to take a day or so to deploy her automated sensors with

the greatest of care. Meanwhile (if a character is not already thinking of it), some of the NPCs will point out that Larkin has requested that a copy of the log be stashed somewhere in system. Also, the group is going to have to find a fuel source. But before doing all that, the PCs will get the opportunity to behold the strange wonders of a brown dwarf system up close, learning the below data as they do so (see the system data).

Prospecting: After Helen lovingly places her sensors in orbit around Back Door, it will be time to go prospecting "iceteroids," the only likely fuel source in this system. Back Door's pseudo-planetary family is not particularly cooperative in this regard. Discovering a suitable fueling site is determined by a task roll.

Task: Discovering a useful iceteroid: Difficult, Sensors, 8 hours.

Helen is the only NPC with Sensors skill (level 2).

Depositing the Copy of the Log: After finding a suitable refueling spot, Morgan will observe that it probably would help any follow-up team if the group put the log recording right on the iceteroid—it would save them the trouble of finding a refueling site themselves. Morgan will volunteer to place the log copy (a secure recorder), and Dumaine will quickly offer assistance. Dumaine wants to make sure that Morgan doesn't add a message of his own. If Morgan has suspicions of Dumaine (which he doesn't), then Dumaine wants to make sure that the American does not have the opportunity to record them for later discovery by follow-up teams that would come in the event that the Operation Back Door team never returned.

Secure Recorders: Secure recorders are often left behind by vessels which fear imminent destruction and/or have an enemy on their tail who wants to prevent them from making a report on what they have seen. Secure recorders incorporate a low-power, high-sensitivity radio receiver that searches for a key code of radio emissions. The code "units" are defined by frequency and duration of signal. When the recorder receives the correct sequence of transmissions, it activates a broad-band transponder. This guides friendly forces to the recorder and its data tapes.

Back Door (BD-111 094307 (-9.0, -43.4, -7.0))

Stellar Type: Brown Dwarf *Absolute Magnitude:* 0.0 *Radius:* 227,243 km *Mass:* 0.02 (Sol) *Luminosity:* 0.000028 *Temp. in Degrees K:* 1350 *Number of Orbits:* 0

System Overview: BD-111 094307 is a modest-sized brown dwarf with a sparse, unresolved planetary accretion disk that extends out to 0.72 AU. The largest object in that disk is a roughly spherical planetoid with a diameter of approximately 320 kilometers, orbiting at a distance of 0.16 AU. Back Door is predominantly ochre and dull-red in color, mottled with smears of amber and brown. The surface appears to be churning in slow-motion, although in actuality this represents massive (and violent) meteorological conditions on the surface.

History: Back Door is the second useful brown dwarf "system" that has been discovered via the Intersystem Baseline Interferometry Project. Subsequent to its discovery by Australian astronomer Helen Asweath, Operation Back Door and the arrival for the *Cat's Feet* represent the first follow-up studies of the substellar system. Ω

"Operation Back Door" continues in **Challenge 50**. The second episode, "First Contact," begins with the PCs entering the last stop on their exploratory jaunt, system SS-27 6854, home of the Ylii.

WRECKING ZONE

By Michael C. LaBossiere

“Wrecking Zone” details the history, inhabitants, and buildings of a former chemical plant now turned into a zone of illegal activity. Set in AD 2013, the scenario uses first-edition *Cyberpunk* rules but can be converted to *Cyberpunk 2020*.

The collapse of America in 1996 turned many urban areas into battle zones. During the course of the disaster, many industrial sites were abandoned as the economy fell to pieces. Many such sites were reoccupied by the droves of people who had lost their homes, but others were taken over by the newest arrival on the street: the boostergangs.

The Wrecking Zone began its existence as a chemical plant in Detroit, Michigan, in 1993. It was a moneymaking venture for about a year (producing chemicals for the U.S. war effort in Central America), but when the stock market fell in 1994, it went out of business and was shut down. In 1998, it was reopened by the federal government to produce chemical agents for police and military units who were struggling to maintain order in the United States. In 2005, it closed again as various parts of Detroit became “unsafe.” In 2006, a group of homeless citizens attempted to move into the complex. Unfortunately for them, an accident occurred which released some rather nasty chemical agents. The chemical cloud spread over a sizable portion of the area and killed nearly 1000 people. After the accident, the complex was avoided as a place too dangerous to occupy.

In 2006, Lt. David Hassan was badly injured by a claymore mine while on patrol in Honduras. He was transferred back to the States and was reassigned to an army unit responsible for tracking down and disposing of “military surplus” (like old weapons, reactors, gas factories, and so forth). Apparently, Lt. Hassan was unhinged by his injury and subsequent cybernetic replacements

because shortly after returning to duty, he destroyed several computer records, stole a truckload of weapons, and fled into the wreckage of Old Detroit.

In 2007, Lt. Hassan formed a boostergang, the Wrecking Crew, and took over a fairly substantial amount of turf, including the chemical complex. In 2009, Hassan was able to get the nuclear reactor working at minimum output with the help of several techs and fixers. The reactor had never been properly deactivated, nor had its fuel been removed, as it was deemed economically unfeasible by certain elements of the government to properly dispose of the fuel and waste in the plant. (The government also hoped to use the reactor to reestablish power in Detroit in the event of its future resurrection as an urban area. The status of the reactor was later lost amidst the governmental chaos of the times. When Lt. Hassan discovered the reactor’s existence at the facility, he ferretted out and destroyed all remaining files and documents which dealt with or mentioned it.)

In 2008, there was a minor war with another boostergang over the complex, but Hassan was able to hold onto it. By 2010, Hassan’s gang had increased substantially in size and had taken over even more turf. In 2011, Hassan converted what was left of the industrial plastics plant into a bar and named it “the Factory.” The entire complex became known as the Wrecking Zone in honor of the gang.

In 2011, the Wrecking Zone became known as a neutral area for other gangs to meet and have their differences settled by negotiation or by combat in the Killing Zone. Some nongang people (mostly solos and

fixers) began to show in small numbers at the Wrecking Zone. By 2012, the Wrecking Zone had established a reputation as a good place to find “hired help” and to conduct “business” (weapon and drug trafficking, and so forth). While the police are aware that such activities occur within the complex, they lack the manpower (and the desire) to do anything about it. As of 2013, the Wrecking Zone is a hotbed of various types of illicit activity.

ENVIRONS

The Wrecking Zone is located in an exceedingly rundown part of town. The buildings around it are all damaged to one degree or another due to the riots and civil disorder of preceding years. The sidewalks are littered with trash and various derelict vehicles that have been simply pushed aside. Only the utterly destitute and hopeless live in this area.

The Wrecking Zone itself is well lit and (relatively) well kept up. It is surrounded by a three-meter-tall concrete wall topped by barbed wire. The main gate was torn down long ago and never replaced. During the day, the area is nearly deserted, but at night the place is alive with activity. After the sun sets, shouting and loud music can be heard spilling out of The Factory and helicopters, Ospreys, and AV-4s occasionally add to the noise.

MAIN GATE

The main gate was torn down long ago, and never replaced. There are, however, chains and several concrete barriers available to close off the gate. On either side of the entrance road are guard boxes. Each

guard box has bulletproof glass (SP+30), firing ports (one for each side and one in the roof), a radio, a small refrigerator, a microwave, and a TV. During the day, each box is manned by one gang member and at night each is manned by two gang members. These guards are fairly well disciplined and have been instructed to keep unwanted people out as well as to prevent trouble.

Generic Guards (2-4)

Int	4	Tech	4
Ref	6/7	CL	8
Luck	4	Att	4
Emp	2	Bod	8

Skills: Streetwise +2, Intimidate +4, Pistol +4, Brawling +4, Awareness +2, Melee Weapons +2.

Cybergear: Two sets of interface plugs, rippers, cyberoptics (2) with infrared and targeting scope, and reflex booster.

Equipment: Uzi 9mm and three clips, Colt Python and three speed loaders, combat knife, radio headset, and Kevlar armor jacket (SP=18).

THE FACTORY

The Factory is a gang bar that was once a chemical production factory (see The Factory Map). The interior has been cleaned out, and there probably aren't too many dangerous chemicals left in it. At night, the interior is pure chaos. Lights and lasers flash in the smoky air, thunderous hypermetal music blasts from the bands and the speakers, and strange people gyrate around in the fog (both external and internal drug-induced fogs). All in all, it looks like some sort of 21st century techno-hell.

The building itself is a sturdy industrial structure and is cavernous inside, now that most of the machinery has been stripped out. The Factory is considered neutral territory, and fighting between gangs is not permitted. Individuals can slug it out, of course, but restraint is encouraged.

Chemical Production 1 and 2: Both of these structures contain automated chemical production equipment. Since the main structure has been stripped, chemicals can no longer be produced in the plant. Besides, the eastern structure's rear section has been blown up (in the chemical spill mentioned earlier). The interiors of these structures are tangled and dangerous places. If for some reason a person were to enter one of them, he could be exposed to various chemical agents, exposed electrical cables, and other nasty things (like mutated, diseased rats).

Band Area: The various bands that play the bar play here. The area has drop-down fencing that is available to keep the more lively fans from attacking the bands (it also curtails stage diving). Most bands forgo the caging and mix it up with the audience. Needless to say, the bands that play here

are not Lawrence Welk types. They play mainly hypermetal (about 10 times as fast and as bad as speed metal), and the way they sing, it is difficult to tell what the lyrics are. However, the music can be danced to (sort of), in rather energetic dances which are similar to "slam dancing." The best way to describe the scene may be as a cross between a cattle stampede and a mass seizure accompanied by what sounds like large cats being tortured by industrial power tools.

Food: This area usually contains a variety of foods as well as cooking equipment (microwaves, barbecues, etc.). The food is, well, somewhat crude, and the occasional burger contains the meat of some anonymous rodent.

Machinery: Since some of the machinery is important for the structural integrity of the building (and it looks cool), pieces of it were left in the building. The machinery no longer works, but when it's hot or when the Factory is having a particularly active night, the machinery will sometimes ooze chemicals. Power still goes through the machinery, so there are occasional flashes and noises as various parts are triggered. There have only been a few serious injuries caused by the machinery, and they kept the crowd entertained while they lasted, so the machinery is kept powered up.

Bar: Each bar serves a wide variety of powerful drinks. A variety of drugs at various prices and of different qualities are available, most of which are not safe (or what they appear to be). Let the buyer beware.

Bathrooms: These are rather nasty.

Using The Factory

If the PCs are gangmembers, this is a good place for them to hang out on occasion. It is also a place where gangs can meet to discuss various things (settling wars, division of territory, and such things) on neutral and safe ground.

If the PCs are not in gangs, they can still come to the bar. As has been indicated, it is a good place to engage in illegal business (provided the Wrecking Crew is given its cut, of course). It is also a good place to hire that extra cannon fodder—er, henchman—needed for certain operations.

If the PCs are cops, they should probably avoid the Factory, unless they are corrupt, well protected, or have suicidal tendencies.

DeathFist (Andrew Clay), Head Bouncer/"Manager"

Int	7	Tech	4
Ref	8/10	CL	7
Luck	6	Att	5
Emp	4	Bod	9

Skills: Athletics +4, Awareness +2, Martial Arts +7, Melee Weapons +2, Rifle +2, Pistol +4, Streetwise +6.



Cybergear: Cybernetic arm (right) with built-in rippers and four-shot 12-gauge shotgun, two sets of interface plugs, cyberoptics with infrared and target scope, reflex booster, and biomonitor.

Equipment: Kevlar armor jacket (SP=18), smartchipped Llama Comanche, combat knife.

Description: DeathFist is a very large man. His cyberarm is jet black with red and silver highlights. He shaves his head and favors black studded leather clothes while working. He is a rather brutal individual and keeps order in his bar with an iron fist (well, composite alloy, actually).

Generic Bouncers (4-8)

Int	4	Tech	3
Ref	7	CL	6
Luck	4	Att	3
Emp	3	Bod	8

Skills: Athletics +3, Melee Weapons +2, Brawling +4, Pistol +3.

Cybergear: Big knucks.

Equipment: Armored T-shirts (SP=10), night sticks, .45 Colt automatics with two clips, radio headsets.

Description: Generic muscle boys. Not too bright and easily provoked.

Customers

The customers will vary a great deal. Most people in this place are gangmembers, such as 'dorphers, posers, and boosters (see page 21 of *Solo of Fortune* for details), but sometimes solos, fixers, and netrunners can be found here. Most people that go here are close to the edge, on it, or over it. Because of the bar's "safety" it is sometimes used by more "respectable" types (solos, fixers, netrunners) to conduct "business." After all, if you want to make a deal for a few cases of squad support weapons, this is one place where you don't have to worry about cops.

REACTOR

This reactor is an older model that was designed and produced in 1991. (The 1991 model was plagued by design problems (one suffered a severe accident, resulting in 57 deaths), forcing it to be redesigned to correct its faults.) This reactor is still operational and has enough fuel to last nearly a century. It was shut down when the plant was closed by the government, but the fuel was not removed and the reactor was not fully deactivated (see above).

When Lt. Hassan took over the plant, he

knew the reactor was cold, but still operational. It took him a few years to find the skilled techs he needed to get the reactor going and the fixers to find the parts he needed, but he did it. The reactor now serves as the power source for the entire complex.

REACTOR CONTROL 1

This is the main control structure for the reactor. The equipment is a mix of 1990s technology and "acquired" equipment. Most of the systems have been heavily repaired, but the controls are quite effective and actually work well.

(1) **Computer:** The reactor's control computer and associated systems are contained here. The system is self-contained. Hassan had his techs remove all links to the outside (to avoid intrusion via the net).

(2) **Control Center:** The reactor's controls are located here. The systems have been modified so that some can be operated via interface, vastly improving the efficiency of operation and reducing the number of required technicians on duty at any one time.

(3) **Control Systems Access:** While this is still the access area, one of the techs has set up his living quarters here (techs are strange people). The room is festooned with wires, has computer parts wired into its walls, and so forth. Somewhere in this spider web is a hammock.

(4) **Storage:** Once a storage area, this room has been converted into a living area for two of the reactor techs. Like area 3, the room is a virtual web of wires and odd hardware. A wide variety of electronic and mechanical items and tools are strewn about the room, including three cybermodems.

(5) **Lounge:** This once served as the reactor crew's lounge, but like several other rooms it has been converted into a living area. Unlike the other tech living areas, this room is neat and spotless. A large workbench has been installed and is neatly organized. There is a cybermodem built into the bench, along with many complex tools.

(6) **Bathroom Facilities:** These are functional and fairly clean.

Lisa Chen, Tech

Int	9	Tech	9
Ref	6	CL	7
Luck	3	Att	7
Emp	7	Bod	5

Skills: Basic Tech +8, Cyber Tech +2, Software Design +3, General Knowledge +6, Specific Knowledge (Physics) +5, Specific Knowledge (Nuclear Science) +5, Athletics +2, Pistol +2.

Cybergear: Two sets of interface plugs, memory chip (Reactor Operation) +3.

Equipment: Cybermodem (linked to the reactor controls, but it can be altered for normal netrunning), tools, HI Standard Der-ringer and 50 rounds of ammunition.

Description: Chen was a promising student at M.I.T., until she was expelled after being accused of providing the Chinese with secret information about a project she was working on. Shortly before she was to go on trial, she was warned that it would be a kangaroo court, so with the help of some friends, she fled Massachusetts and hid out. By chance, she met one of Hassan's people and was recruited. She is rather bitter about the incident and is loyal to Hassan. She believes she is still being sought by the authorities, so she is a bit paranoid. There is a reward for information leading to her arrest (\$5000) and a reward for capturing her (\$10,000 if alive and \$5000 if dead). She lives in area 3.

Jeff Spender, Tech

Int	7	Tech	7
Ref	5	CL	2
Luck	6	Att	6
Emp	6	Bod	4

Skills: Software Design +4, General Knowledge +4, Specific Knowledge (Electronic Control Systems) +4, Specific Knowledge (Automated Control Systems) +2, Gamble +2, Basic Tech +4.

Equipment: A wide variety of tools.

Description: Jeff is a very thin, tall man with sandy blond hair. He is basically a coward at heart and panics easily in tough situations. His major flaw is that he is a compulsive gambler and has no ability to stop himself, especially when he is losing. He ran up massive debts in Las Vegas as a grad student and fled when he couldn't pay them off. He eventually wound up with Hassan, who offered him protection. There is a price tag of \$12,000 on his head, collectible in Las Vegas from the Doradin Loan Agency. He lives in area 4.

Steve Sabin, Tech

Int	6	Tech	7
Ref	6	CL	8
Luck	5	Att	5
Emp	6	Bod	6

Skills: Brawling +2, Athletics +2, Specific Knowledge (Welding) +6, Basic Tech +4, Cybertech +2, Rotorwing Tech +2, Rifle +2, Pistol +2

Cybergear: Two interface plugs, skin-watch, reflex chip (Martial Arts +3), memory chip (AV-4 Tech +2), memory chip (Aircraft Tech +1)

Equipment: A wide variety of tools, Browning Hi-Power (9mm) with four clips, Sternmeyer M-95A (see page 39 of *Solo of Fortune*) with four boxes of ammo, flak vest (SP=20), nylon helmet (SP=20), combat knife.

Description: Steve is a short man with short black hair and a beard. He was a US Army technician until he deserted two years ago after being contacted by Hassan. Steve

does most of the welding work in the complex and also serves as the guard for the reactor. He always carries his Browning and combat knife. He lives in area 4.

Fred Streck

Int	9	Tech	9
Ref	4	CL	6
Luck	4	Att	4
Emp	2	Bod	5

Skills: General Knowledge +6, Specific Knowledge (Cybernetic Design Theory) +4, Simple Language (German +2), Write +2, Basic Tech +4, Cyber Tech +6, Teaching +1.

Cyber Gear: Two interface plugs, cyber-optic (right eye) with micro/telescopes and antidazzle protection, cyberaudio (right ear) with radio splice and wearman, cyberarm (right arm) with tape recorder and .22 pistol, biomonitor.

Description: Once a researcher for a major corporation, Fred was severely injured during an industrial accident (due to corporate negligence and cost cutting). His corporate insurance paid for his replacement parts. Unfortunately, the stress of the accident combined with the effects of the cybernetics pushed him close to the edge. He went a bit crazy for awhile, but recovered after therapy (mostly). He left work and lived in the ruins of Detroit until Hassan's gang captured him. He was able to persuade Hassan not to kill him and has been working for him ever since. He lives in area 5.

REACTOR CONTROL 2

Access and Control: This building contains additional machinery for controlling and operating the reactor. This area is rarely used, as most systems in it now function automatically. It is, however, routinely checked by the techs.

KILLING ZONE

The Killing Zone is a fenced-in area behind the Factory. It was once the loading area for the chemicals produced in what is now the Factory and the two attached chemical production areas. Now it is used as a combat arena to settle disputes or for entertainment purposes. The Zone itself is fenced in on three sides by a heavy-duty electric fence that is four meters tall (fence damage is 4D6; insulated clothing will help). The fourth side is blocked off by heavy-duty chemical containers. The interior contains many scattered chemical containers (represented by the hexagons) as well as a wide variety of litter, gear, body parts, flashing lights, and speakers. The chemical containers are mostly empty (some due to bullet holes) but some contain noxious chemicals (the exact effects are up to the referee). Sometimes the damaged containers are sealed up and refilled with various things to make things "interesting." The

Wrecking Zone

Main Gate
(Destroyed)

Parking

Parking

Reactor
Control
1

Reactor
Control
2

Coolant Tanks

Nuclear Reactor

Chemical
Production
1

The Factory

Chemical
Production
2

Killing Zone

Chemical
Production
3

Warehouse 1

Warehouse 2

Control
Center
1

Control
Center
2

Helicopter
Landing
Pad

Control
Center
3

Control
Center
4

AV-4
Landing
Pad

AV-4
Landing
Pad

ground is littered with trash and things like shell casings, weapons, pieces of armor, and so forth.

The Killing Zone is basically an arena for combat. It has a variety of uses. It is commonly used for controlled gang fighting, personal duels, or as a show for the customers of the Factory (a fight night has a higher cover charge, of course). The Zone is equipped with many cameras which transmit to screens in the bar. The action can also be watched from the rooftops of the surrounding buildings.

A Typical Fight: What occurs is this: The two sides are lowered into the Zone by rope or air vehicle. At the signal, they then proceed to try to kill each other. The rules and conditions vary from night to night. Sometimes weapons limitations are in force (for example, only melee weapons, or only weapons that are found in the Zone), sometimes terrain conditions are altered (for example, the area may be coated with fluorescent paint and lit with black lights), or things may be spiced up a bit (mines may be laid, flares dropped into the zone, snipers positioned on the nearby roofs, bright lights are shown into the Zone at random, or smoke bombs are set off). Generally, the weirder and more dangerous the conditions are, the more the fans like it.

The Zone in Play: The Zone can be used in play in a variety of ways. If the PCs are gangmembers, they might fight in it as part of a dispute settlement or for fun. Non-gangmembers can still fight in the zone of course, and there are often prizes for winning. Hassan also uses the Zone as a sporting way to execute those he wants dead. The usual deal is this: The victims are dropped into the western part of the Zone and go free if they can make it out of the eastern part by squeezing past the chemical containers. Normally, the victims are dropped in unarmed. Nobody has made it out yet.

CHEMICAL PRODUCTION 3

This chemical production machinery is designed to produce various gas agents. Hassan has acquired much of the material he needs to produce a very dangerous nerve gas and as soon as he gets the machinery fully repaired (it was damaged by the chemicals sitting in it for years), the material he needs, and a skilled chemist (his last chemist was killed in an accident). An examination of the machinery by a competent individual (tech skill) will reveal that it is operational and a closer examination by a person with chemistry skill or knowledge about toxic gasses will reveal that nerve gas can be manufactured by the machinery provided additional material is provided. Naturally, the authorities would like to know about this (as well as the reactor, though it can't produce weapons grade fissionable material).

WAREHOUSES

The warehouses are sturdy buildings designed to hold chemical containers. They are metal and concrete and have no windows, except for in the offices. The warehouse is rarely fully occupied. Gangmembers are usually busy engaging in mayhem or theft (or in jail). The gangmembers present are vicious and brutal, but will obey Hassan or his "officers."

Warehouse 1: This warehouse has been converted into a living area for the lower ranked gangmembers. It is basically "community living." The interior is decorated in a very bizarre style (chains, lights, weapons, masks, etc.). The inhabitants are equally bizarre.

(1) *Office:* The office has been converted into bathroom facilities. Not pretty, but functional.

(2) *Entrance:* Generally kept clear, except for a few motorcycles.

(3) *Office/Checkpoint:* This area was originally used to check and record what was in the warehouse. It is now used as a guard station manned by the generic guards.

(4) *Records:* Once used to store computer records, now used as a resting area for the guards.

(5) *Storage:* Once the main storage area of the warehouse, this area has been converted into living space. Some areas have been partitioned off and some lofts have been built. The upper area is filled with tangled cables and platforms which enable transit from one part of the warehouse to another, providing one is a skilled climber. Some of the stranger gangmembers have taken to living in this spider's nest.

(6) *Special Storage:* Once a special storage area, this now serves as a food refrigerator.

(7) *Special Storage:* This has been converted into a sort of kitchen.

(8) *Special Storage:* This now serves as a food refrigerator.

Warehouse 2: This warehouse is actually used for storage.

(1) *Office:* This contains the original furniture and is used as a sleeping area by the guards.

(2) *Entrance:* The entrance is clear and watched fairly well by the guards in area 3

(3) *Office/Checkpoint:* Two guards are always on duty here (see generic guards, below), and there are four guards assigned here in all. Of course, more can be called from warehouse 1 if trouble occurs.

(4) *Records:* This contains a listing of the contents of the warehouse and a code for who owns what (translatable only by Hassan's book).

(5) *Storage Area:* This area can contain anything from empty space to stolen armored vehicles or aircraft. Hassan will store just about anything for a price, including drugs, weapons, and people. Hassan stores his own arms here: four boxes of six Browning Hi-Powers (each), two boxes of four Desert Eagles (each), three boxes of six Ingram MAC 10s (each), five boxes of six M-

16s (each), two boxes of six Ithaca Stakeout shotguns (each), four boxes each holding four AK 74s, 10 500-round boxes of 9mm ammunition, 40 500-round boxes of .357 ammunition, 10 500-round boxes of .45 ammunition, 10 500-round boxes of 5.56mm ammunition, five 100-round boxes of 12-gauge shells, four 500-round boxes of 5.45mm ammunition, 20 flak vests, 20 helmets, 100 armored T-shirts, and four boxes of 12 fragmentation grenades (each).

(6-8) *Special Storage:* These thick-walled rooms are equipped for temperature and pressure control. Hassan is willing to sell space in them for special items (drugs and so forth). There are usually several kilos or more of illegal drugs in these storage rooms.

Generic Guard

Int	4	Tech	4
Ref	8	CL	7
Luck	4	Att	4
Emp	3	Bod	8

Skills: Athletics +4, Brawling +4, Pistol +4, Melee Weapons +2, Intimidate +4.

Cybergear: Interface plugs, cyberoptics (one eye) with targeting scope and infrared, cyberarm (one arm) with built in rippers, skinwatch.

Equipment: Ithaca Stakeout shotguns with 50 rounds, Browning Hi-Powers with two clips, armored jackets (SP=18).

Description: Ugly, vicious, and stupid. There will be at least two guards on duty at any time, unless there is a really big party going on or something.

Gangmembers

There are 56 gangmembers that live in area 5 of warehouse 1 in total (the number varies depending on deaths and recruitments). Three types live here: the greenies, the regulars, and the vets.

Typical Greenie

Int	5	Tech	4
Ref	7	CL	6
Luck	4	Att	5
Emp	6	Bod	6

Skills: Streetwise +2, Intimidate +2, Pistol +2, Rifle +2, Brawling +2, Awareness +2.

Cybergear: Usually a cyberoptic and interface plugs; rippers and big knucks are also common.

Gear: Armored T-shirt (SP=10), pistol, knife.

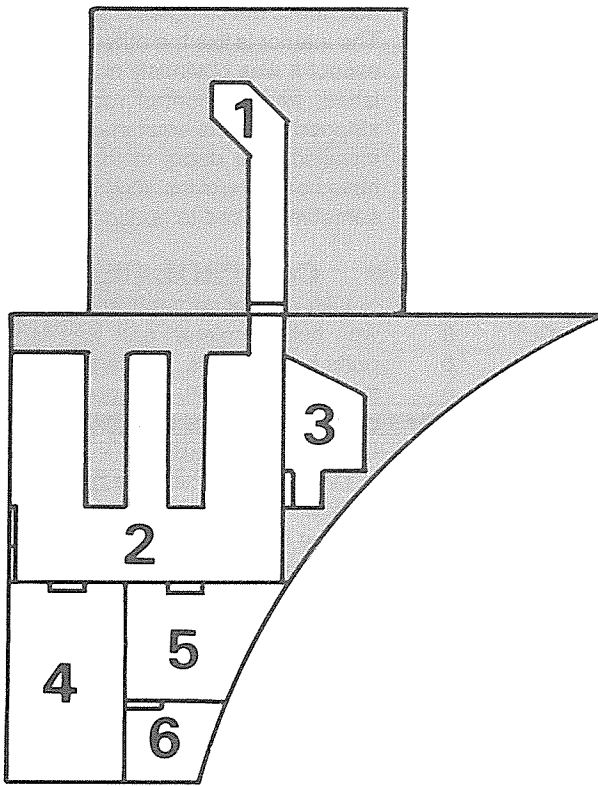
Typical Regular

As typical greenie, but add one to Cool, one to Body, and take away at least two from Empathy.

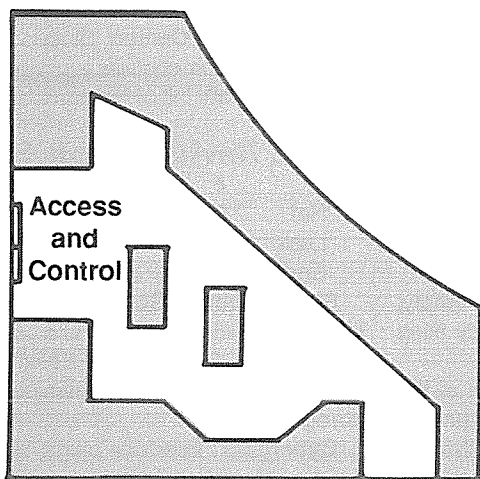
Skills: As above, but at level +3 to +4.

Cybergear: At least one cyberoptic, rippers or big knucks, and interface plugs.

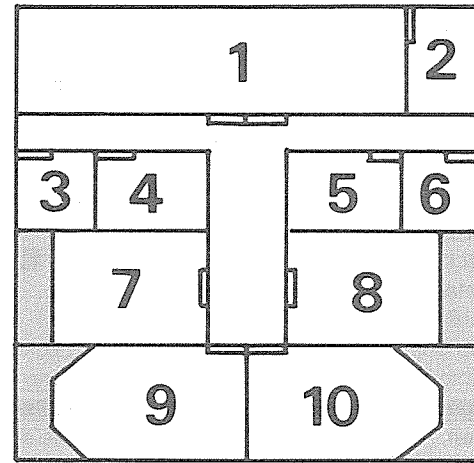
Equipment: Armored T-shirt (SP=10) or jacket (SP=18), shotgun or machinegun, pistol, knife.



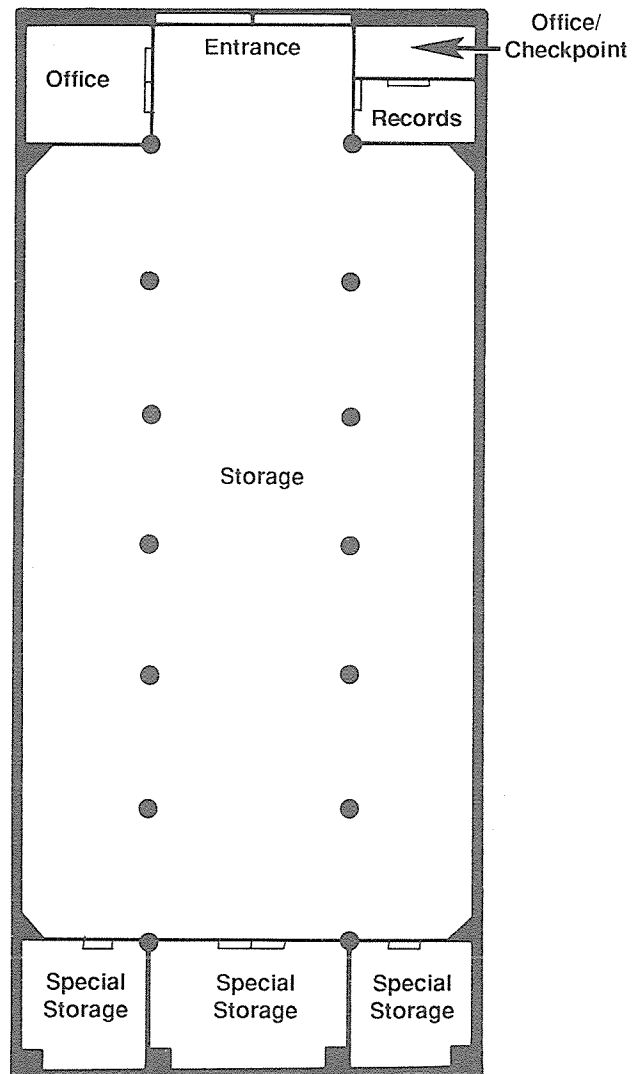
Reactor Control (7)



Reactor Control (8)



Reactor Control (1-4)



Warehouses 1 and 2

Typical Vet

As typical regular, but add at least 1 to Cool and Body, and subtract 1 to 2 more from Empathy.

Skills: As above, but at +4 to +6.

Cybergear: As typical regular, plus at least one cyberlimb with extras.

Equipment: Armored jacket (SP=18), machinegun or assault rifle, pistol, knives, some grenades.

CONTROL CENTER 1

This control center was originally used to control the machinery of the main chemical production building (now the Factory). Since this plant is no longer operational, Hassan had it converted into living quarters for his men.

(1) **Lounge:** This area is now used as a sort of kitchen.

(2) **Bathroom:** The obvious, but fairly clean and neat.

(3-6) **Offices:** Still used as offices.

(7-10) **Control Rooms:** These rooms have been converted into bedrooms. Compared to the warehouse and the techs' rooms, these rooms are rather normal.

Garth Londer, Solo

Int	7	Tech	6
Ref	8/10	CL	9
Luck	6	Att	7
Emp	3	Bod	8

Skills: Pistol +4, Rifle +7, Athletics +6, Martial Arts +4, Motorcycle +2, General Knowledge +2, Stealth +4, Interrogation +4, Intimidate +2, Basic Tech +4, Combat Cool +4, Combat Sense +4.

Cybergear: Interface plugs, two cyberoptics with targeting scope and infrared, cyberarm with built-in 9mm Uzi, biomonitor, rippers, reflex booster.

Equipment: Smartchipped H & K MP5 with four clips, Browning Hi-Power with two clips, Atchison Assault shotgun with four clips, Kevlar jacket (SP=18), armored T-shirt (SP=10), helmet (SP=20), headset radio, two frag grenades.

Description: Like Hassan, Garth is former military. He left the service after killing his commanding officer in Central America. He returned to the U.S. and soon joined up with Hassan. Garth is a bit unstable, but will obey Hassan. Garth is still wanted by the U.S. military, and they would be glad to have him (or a large part of him) back. Garth lives in area 10.

Lance Henderson, Netrunner

Int	8	Tech	8
Ref	7	CL	7
Luck	6	Att	6
Emp	4	Bod	5

Skills: Interface +6, Software Design +4, Athletics +2, Pistol +2, Rifle +2, Stealth +2, Basic Tech +4.

Cybergear: Interface plugs.

Equipment: Browning Hi-Power with four

clips, cybermodem. Programs available to the cybermodem include: Hammer, Codecracker I, Codecracker II, Worm, Invisibilty, Killer I, Killer II, and Imp.

Description: Lance is a former military netrunner. He deserted with Garth, and joined up with Hassan at the same time as Garth. Lance is a competent netrunner. He favors the Mega City version of the matrix. The military would also like him back for trial. He lives in area 9.

Hector Castille, Solo

Int	7	Tech	4
Ref	6/8	CL	8
Luck	6	Att	6
Emp	4	Bod	8

Skills: Combat Sense +2, Pistol +4, Rifle +4, Melee Weapon +2, Stealth +4, Drive +2, Basic Tech +2, Intimidation +6.

Cybergear: Reflex booster, cyberoptic (right eye) with targeting scope, two cyberlegs with 9mm pistol in hidden thigh compartment, cyberaudio (both ears) with radio splice and phone link.

Equipment: Smartchipped AK-47 with four clips, Browning Hi-Power with two clips, combat knife, two grenades, flak jacket (SP=20), helmet (SP=20).

Description: Hector was a rebel officer in Honduras. He was badly injured by Hassan during the conflict and after receiving medical treatment (and cyber replacement limbs), he came to the States to kill him. However, Hassan was able to convince Hector to join him instead. Hector enjoys killing Americans since he sees all Americans as guilty of the crimes committed in Central America. He lives in area 8.

CONTROL CENTER 2

This control center controls the production machinery at chemical production building 3. The control center has been fixed up, but is not currently occupied. The chemist who worked and lived here was killed in an accident.

(1) **Lounge:** This lounge area contains a couple of couches and chairs and one scrawny coffee table, all of them having seen better days.

(2) **Bathroom:** This bathroom is functional and in good shape. A rat has made a nest under the sink.

(3-6) **Offices:** These rooms are empty, except for a desk, chair, and empty filing cabinet in one.

(7-10) **Controls:** An examination of the controls by a competent individual (Industrial Engineering skill of some kind) will reveal that the machinery is operational and that the controls and computer programs are set to guide the production of a rather potent nerve gas. The main program indicates that once certain key materials are available, the gas can be produced.

CONTROL CENTER 3

This control center is unfinished. It was intended to be used to control a planned addition to the complex that was never built. The interior is like the other control centers, except it was obviously not completely finished, and its control rooms have been stripped of all the equipment that had been installed. The doors to this control center have heavy locks installed as this building is sometimes used to house prisoners.

CONTROL CENTER 4

Like control center 3, this control center was not completed and was stripped for parts by the techs. Unlike the other center, this one has had the interior refinished with chrome metal. The walls, floors, ceiling, and fixtures are all chromed.

(1) **Lounge:** This area has been remodeled as a shooting gallery. The walls are marked with weapons fire, and the floor is often littered with casings.

(2) **Bathroom:** This room has been modified to handle Hassan's new body. As such, the "facilities" are quite odd.

(3-6) **Offices:** These are empty.

(7-8) **Control Centers:** These rooms are stripped out and chromed.

(9) **Control:** This room has been stripped out and chromed. A computer is set up in the room. The major programs on the computer are: a program on how to produce chemical weapons (including nerve gas), a program on producing nuclear weapons, a program on using radioactives to contaminate water supplies, detailed maps of several major cities including their water supplies and subways, and a "diary" of semicoherent personal rantings. Also in the room is a weapons rack containing the following: a .577 Boomer Buster (page 50 of *Solo of Fortune*) with two clips, a High Power 15 (page 50, *Solo of Fortune*) with four drums, a Vortex (**Challenge 43**) with four clips, four combat knives, and six fragmentation grenades.

(10) **Control Center:** Stripped out and chromed, this room contains equipment needed to support what's left of Hassan's body.

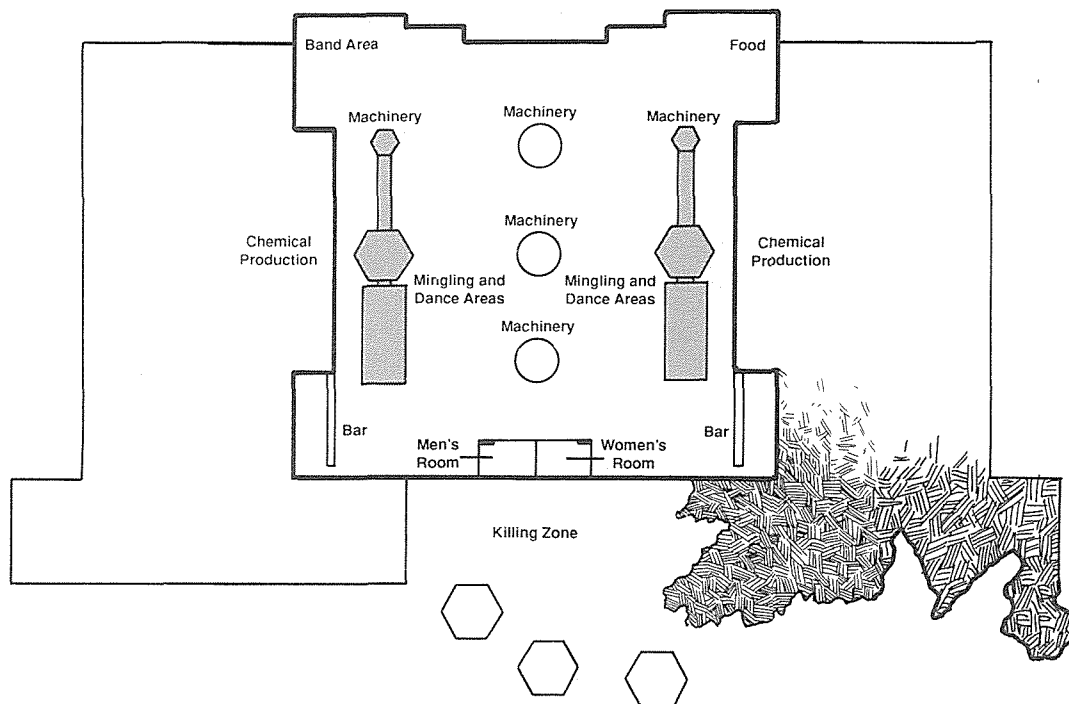
Lt. David Hassan, Solo

Int	8	Tech	7
Ref	7/9	CL	10
Luck	4	Att	3
Emp	0	Bod	9

Skills: Combat Sense +8, Athletics +8, Martial Arts +6, Pistol +4, Rifle +6, General Knowledge +2, Drive +2, Basic Tech +2, Language (Spanish) +2, Intimidate +7, Interrogate +2.

Cybergear: Interface plugs; biomonitor; two cyberarms with built-in rippers and 9mm mini-Uzi SMGs; cyberoptic (left) with image enhancement, infrared, and dartgun; cyberoptic (right) with image enhancement, infrared, and targeting scope; cyberaudio (both ears) with radio splice, phone link, bug

Factory



detector, and scrambler; cyberleg (right) with Kevlar armor (SP=20) and a six-shot, removable-frame shotgun in upper thigh; cyberleg (left) with Kevlar armor (SP=20) and a 9mm Browning Hi-Power in a hidden thigh compartment; reflex booster; and full body plating (giving Hassan a SP of 20 and a SDC of 40 in the head and torso).

Equipment: Smartchipped Vortex (Challenge 43) with four clips, Cyber Elite Nine with four clips.

Description: Physically, Hassan is a full cyborg. Over the years his stock of cybernetic parts has mounted, and now he is barely human. About the only human parts he has left are his head and torso, and even those are interlaced with metal and armored. His body is usually painted with an urban camo pattern, but he often has it done in tiger stripe or chromed (for special occasions).

In terms of appearance, he is a fairly frightening figure. His head has been reworked so that it looks like a skull, and his active infrared causes his eyes to glow. He has had his teeth replaced with metallic fangs. His fingers and toes are long and pointed at the ends. All of these features make him look like some sort of mechanized Grim Reaper.

Hassan is completely insane. His experiences during the wars and his cybernetic parts have combined to push him beyond the realm of normal humanity. While he is capable of rational thought and planning, his goals are quite twisted. He fled the army

when he had a "vision" of a mechanical god telling him that he had a special mission to convert all flesh to metal and to destroy all flesh that would not convert. He formed his gang to further this end and actively encourages them to get as many cybernetic parts as possible.

He plans to fulfill his mission in the following manner: First, he will recruit as many people as possible into his gang. Second, he will have them converted to metal as soon as possible. Third, when "the time is right" he will release poison gas and radioactive material into as many inhabited areas as possible. Of course, Hassan hasn't told the other members of his gang exactly what he is doing. Most of the gangmembers think he is just working on the gas to kill other gangs or for blackmail. Of course, most of the gang would stick with him even if they knew the depths of Hassan's insanity (most of the techs and anyone with high Empathy will not, however).

HELICOPTER LANDING PAD AND AV-4 LANDING PADS

Hassan has acquired four AV-4s. Each vehicle has an SP=40 and SDC=100 and is armed with an M-134 Minigun (page 74 of *Solo of Fortune*). There are six gangmembers with AV-4 Pilot skill, and five with Heavy Weapons skill. Hassan plans to acquire more vehicles and convert them so they can carry and spray poison gas and radioactive materials.

ADVENTURES

This area provides opportunity for many adventures, ranging in complexity from a night in the Factory to a battle to prevent Hassan from wiping out large portions of the population. Some adventure ideas include:

Arrest: The PCs (either police or bounty hunters) are assigned or have chosen to try to arrest (or capture) one or more of Hassan's people.

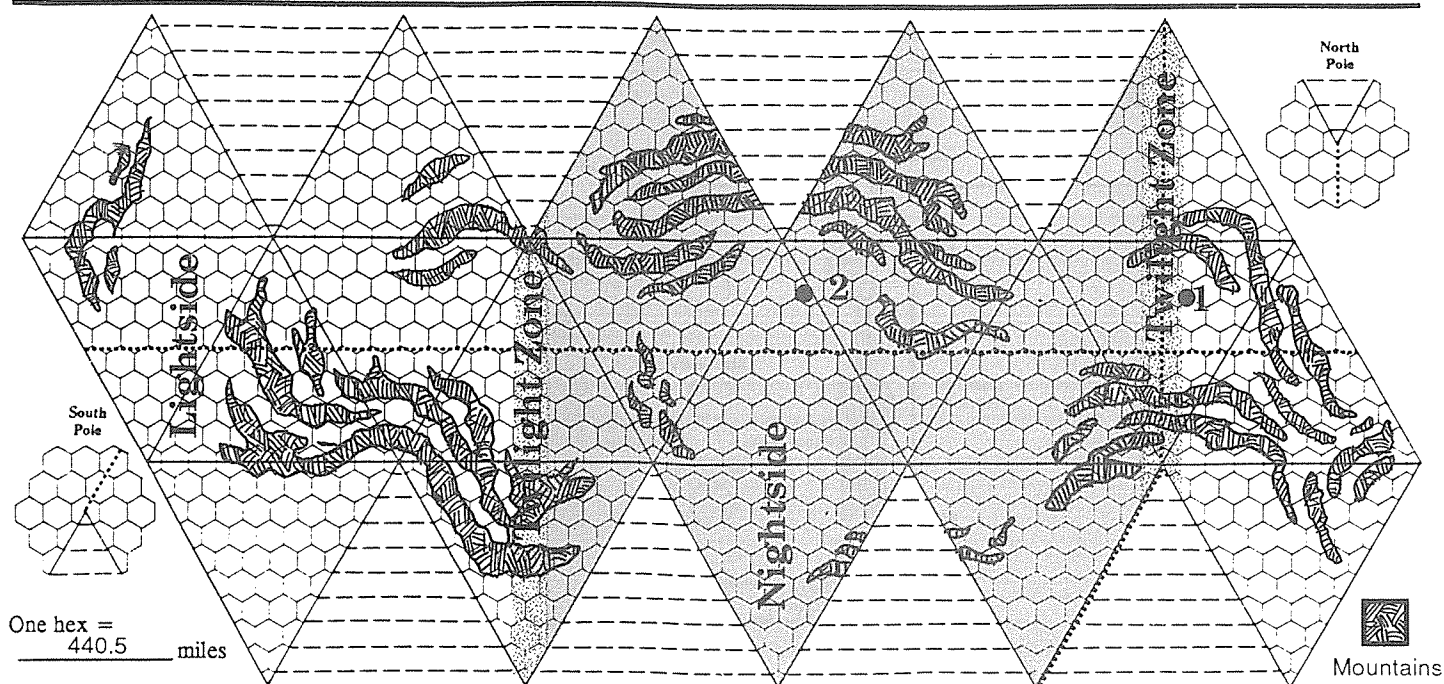
Gang War: The PCs are members of a rival gang who want to wipe out the Wrecking Crew and take their turf.

Investigation: The PCs are assigned or hired to find out what is going on in the complex. This could involve a lengthy campaign to get into the gang and get information from within.

Battle: Somebody (Hassan) has killed a large number of people in New Detroit with poison gas and radioactives (assume Hassan found a new chemist). It is up to the player characters to find out who is responsible and put a stop to it.

Investigation: The PCs are hired or assigned to do a story on Old Detroit gangs and stumble onto the Wrecking Zone (or deliberately seek it out). Or the PCs could be sent on a police or military investigation (or this could be a joint investigation).

Join Hassan: After all, this is *Cyberpunk*, so the characters may wish to join Hassan. Of course, they might not wish to serve Hassan's true cause and might end up turning against him—at least one would hope. Ω



Planet type Rockball Diameter 6294 mi. Gravity 0.98 G Density 6.8 Composition High-Iron
 Axial Tilt 2 ° Seasonal Variation None Length of Day Tide-locked Length of Year No days/2.075 Earth-years
 Atmosphere: Pressure trace () Type and Composition Varies due to outgassing from fissures
 Climate Very hot Temperatures at 30° latitude: Low 390 ° Average 400 ° High 410 °
 Surface Water None Humidity None % Primary Terrain Mountains, pools of liquid metal
 Mineral Resources: Gems/Crystals Plentiful Rare Minerals Ext. Plentiful Radioactives Plentiful
 Heavy Metals Ext. Plentiful Industrial Metals Ample Light Metals Ample Organics Absent
 Moons None

Biosphere: Dominant life form None

Other significant life forms None

Civilization: Population(s) 6500 (PR 3)

Tech Level(s) 10

Control Rating 4

Society Corporate government

Starports Class III on nightside

Installations New Pittsburgh mining colony

Economic/Production Exports radioactives and rare earths, heavy metals; most food and all equipment is imported

Other notes: Map Key: 1. New Pittsburgh; 2. Inferno Starport. Inferno lies inside Cadigal's stellar radius. Mining colony run by Radiant Futures, Ltd.

System Information:

Star Name Cadigal

Type M3 lb

Location Corporate Worlds 7/8/-3

Biozone 50-76

Inner Limit 1.0

Number of Planets 5

Planet	Orbit	Distance	Type	Diameter	Density	Gravity	Atmosphere	Notes
	1							
	2							
	3							
	4		(Four empty orbits within stellar radius.)					
Inferno	5	4.1	Rockball	6,294	6.8	.98	None	Det. above
Purgatory	6	7.3	Rockball	6,100	2.8	.39	Thin nitrogen	—
Paradise	7	13.7	Gas giant	47,500	2.1	2.28	Hy-He	Many-colored moons
Beatrice	8	26.5	Gas giant	37,000	2.0	1.69	Hy-Meth	Brilliant rings
Dante	9	52.1	Host. terr.	7,600	5.2	.91	Dense N-CO ₂	—
	10							
	11							
	12							
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o one claimed tourists would visit a world that orbits inside its primary. But Radiant Futures, Ltd., a closely held mining company in the Corporate Sector, was not interested in tourism when it established a mining colony on Inferno. RFL just wants the planet's rich mineral resources. To get them, it exploits a hundred mining families in indentured servitude.

The company calls its base New Pittsburgh. The colonists call it "the Pit."

Cadigal is an M3Ib red supergiant. The aptly named Inferno lies just within its stellar envelope. However, the vacuum here is nearly as hard as it is around Cadigal's most distant satellite—it's just hotter.

Tidal pressures from Cadigal keep this dead rockball geologically active, and planetary tremors (still called "earthquakes") strike every few days. "Days" refers to Earth standard, since Inferno is tidally locked to Cadigal. One side perpetually faces the star, the other (site of the small spaceport) lies in darkness. Along the boundary between them, inaccurately called the "Twilight Zone," RFL's mining families struggle to survive.

A HARD LIFE

The mining families search for pools of liquid selenium or gallium, open veins of radioactives, and superheavy elements brought up from the core. Earthquakes frequently expose new lodes, then bury them just as quickly, so miners travel the "sunset line" from site to site, carrying their homes with them like terrestrial turtles. They come when the company calls them to exploit a big find, or they prospect on their own for a lode that will net them a finder's bonus and (theoretically) royalties.

To compete for the big discoveries, miners have to move their halftrack homes into rough terrain, risking earthquake damage. They send their remotely operated drones far into the sunside, risking loss of precious equipment to the scalding heat. Couples need extra hands, so they have children, risking a high infant mortality rate. Everything in the miners' lives carries risk.

In the red heat from the star that fills half their sky, the miners grow hard-boiled. Recruiters promised them a comfortable home in New Pittsburgh's domed settlement, a "grubstake" of free prospecting equipment, and the chance at riches. But the grubstake equipment breaks down almost as often as the ground shakes. The company charges ruinous prices for oxygen, food, and repairs, so every day puts the miners further in debt. They cannot afford to spend one night a year "in town." The men and women of the Pit are as tough as frontier settlers come, but as cynical as only disillusioned dreamers can be.

CRISES IN THE MAKING

Under these conditions it's not surprising that people rebel. RFL perpetually combats several destabilizing agents:

Unionism: Unionism is the terror of the company. RFL offers bonuses to miners who report this activity. Would-be organizers encounter suspicious accidents or just disappear.

Crime: Any family that has just made a good strike can fall prey to poachers, robbers, or computer hackers back at New Pittsburgh. Lucky thieves get enough money to pay off their

contracts (along with a bribe to keep the company contract agent quiet) and leave Inferno. Much worse are

the thieves who get enough money, but stay—because they are mean enough to enjoy the easy pickings.

Drugs: Alcohol and mild hallucinogens let the miners escape from their problems for awhile. Harder, "designer" drugs are starting to hit the black market, notably Analgine (*GURPS Space*, page 68). Corrupt company supply officials distribute these.

ADVENTURES ON INFERNO

Restabilize: Denzel Fanter, a cold-fish personnel director for RFL, hires or orders the PCs to get one of the above problems under control. The PCs can go in either covertly or overtly. At some point, they will begin to realize they might be fighting on the wrong side. If they continue obeying Fanter's orders, they'll get fat rewards, but perpetuate the miners' misery. If they help the miners instead, the company may not let them off the planet!

Destabilize: A miner has smuggled messages to a relative on another world, either a PC or someone who enlists the PCs' aid. The mission is to go in and break the miner's contract or smuggle him and his large family offplanet. The PCs must come up with a reasonable cover to get past company officials or sneak in. Once on Inferno, they may feel moved to break up the whole operation by sabotage or through public, offplanet revelation of RFL's abuses. Ω

Inferno (Cadigal I)

**A planet entry for *GURPS Space*,
located in the same system as
Dante (Cadigal V), described in
*GURPS Space Atlas 2:
A Guide to the Corporate Worlds*.**

By Allen Varney



This adventure is set aboard the *USS Enterprise*, although any Federation ship would do. Any time period may be used for this scenario since it does not depend on political or military interaction with any known intelligence. The referee must paint a picture of horror and the macabre, while at the same time allowing the PCs a maximum range of options. Players may find that mystery and horror, on which this adventure is based, are eternal qualities of the universe, outliving the petty squabbles between rival life forms.

MESSAGE FROM STAR FLEET

While their ship is patrolling its quadrant, the characters receive a message from Star Fleet Command. Its text is terse:

From: Admiral Javovic, Star Fleet Command

To: *USS Enterprise*

Something of an emergency has prompted this change to your routine patrol orders.

On Stardate 7117.3, the commercial freighter Tamura Dream entered a previously unknown region of space. This region, anomaly 1124-3 on your screens, somehow affected the crew of the Tamura Dream, killing over half the crew of 20 before the ship could escape the region.

The surviving crew reported hysteria and "maniacal death" among the victims. Apparently the region of space itself was somehow responsible.

This anomaly must be explored to determine its affect on our spacefaring culture. You are ordered to perform initial exploration of the region to determine if there is intelligent life within it, whether the region is moving, and if it is moving, whether it poses a threat to any populated worlds.

Star Fleet estimates your time of arrival to the anomaly to be seven hours at Warp 6. We'll expect a report within eight hours.

Good luck, Enterprise. Javovic out.

On the viewscreens is depicted a region of space outside the *Enterprise's* regular patrol route. The region is claimed by no known species, and no Federation ship has ever logged a voyage through there.

The trip will take seven hours at Warp 6. Travel times at other speeds must be determined by the referee. During the trip, the characters may wish to review the logtapes from the freighter. Unfortunately, Star Fleet will not release transcripts of the interviews its personnel made with the surviving crewmembers. If pressed, Admiral Javovic will tell the ship's captain that the tapes haven't been fully evaluated by the psychological staff at Star Fleet Headquarters. In short, the crewmembers must go in with what little information they already have.

Abaddon

An adventure
of horror in a unique
setting.

By Jeffrey Groteboer

ENTERING THE ZONE

At first approach the zone will appear to be an area of space two light-years across. Successful sensor scans, however, will show it to be of seemingly unlimited volume, however contradictory that sounds.

The closer the ship gets to the edge of the anomaly and the more time passes, the more the crew will be affected—one by one crewmembers will go insane. The referee should roll randomly against nonplayer characters' Psi Potentials. Those that fail the roll will go mad—each in his own way. Be creative, but don't overdo it. Each person affected will do something extremely bizarre, then suddenly fall into a coma (to eventually die if sufficient time passes).

One of the affected NPCs should be a crewmember regularly assigned to the bridge and known by the PCs.

Sitting on the edge of the anomaly won't yield the player characters any helpful information—to decipher the mystery of the zone and the mysterious affliction of the crew, the ship will have to enter the zone.

As the ship enters the anomalous region, the referee should paint pictures of horror in the minds of the major characters. Their skin will crawl, and the hairs on the back of their necks will stand up. Some people will get nervous and edgy, jumping at sudden motions and sounds. Some will jerk their heads back and forth randomly, as if they were somehow aware of something looking over their shoulder.

Inside the zone, the mysterious insanity and its associated collapses will continue, bewildering the medical staff. Medical personnel performing scans and analyses will find no chemical or hormonal imbalances, and no wounds.

Even Vulcans will be affected by the emanations of the zone, although not to such a serious extent as humans. Vulcans will not go insane, but will be bothered by strange feelings they can't identify.

CONTACT

After a few minutes inside the zone, the sensors will begin to pick up strange anomalies and undecipherable readings. Seconds later, a vision will appear on the bridge. The bridge crewmember who collapsed will appear near the large viewscreen for a few minutes, hovering in space, his visage ghostly. He will try to speak, but the only intelligible words the characters will hear will be "Help me...the horror...the loneliness...."

After theorizing a bit on the occurrence, the characters may notice that some of the sensor gibberish suddenly clears, and the sensors detect a solid mass ahead. Characters with moderate skill at sensor use can identify the mass as a small, apparently rogue, planet, as no star is present. Indistinct life forms are readable. A successful scan will show them to be humanoid, although definitely not human. To find out more, the characters will have to beam down.

THE PLANET

The landing party materializes in a park surrounded by buildings. The referee should describe a serene setting, similar to the quad of a small university: grass, sidewalks, trees, and flowers with clean, modern buildings surrounding them. At first, all they see are surprisingly Earthlike flora and fauna. Then suddenly, as though class were letting out, hundreds, then thousands, of apparitions float out of the buildings and traverse the quad. They are dressed in various styles spanning across the galaxy and through thousands of years of history.

The characters each have a 5% chance of recognizing one of the apparitions. If anyone does, the apparition will be a dead relative or historical figure. If the ghost knows the character, it will try to communicate. The theme of the communication attempt will be the same as the message communicated by the apparition on the bridge: horror, loneliness, fear, etc. After a short, terrifying conversation, the ghost will continue on its way, drawn away by an irresistible compulsion against its will, leaving only questions.

Soon the ghost of the bridge crewmember reappears and tries to explain what is happening. The ghost states that his mental and psychic essence—his soul or spirit, if you will—has been forcibly drawn from his body, and that other souls continue to arrive from the *Enterprise*. He says this planet is a world of the dead, and compares it to being in hell.

If possible, one of the landing party, preferably an NPC, should go mad at this point, suddenly collapsing, writhing in inhuman contortions, seizing up, and finally going limp. The PCs will see the NPC's ghost rise from his body and float away. It looks back, with its arms outstretched toward its body, as if yearning to return.

The player characters should now realize their peril. Their souls are somehow being stolen by the zone. If they remain here, they will eventually all collapse and die, condemned to spend eternity with the other millions of ghosts here.

OPTIONS

Leave Now:

They may "chicken out" and leave the planet, resulting in the eventual death of a large number of crewmembers and

a lot of unanswered questions. This will yield scorn from the admiral upon the ship's return and will spell the end of a captain's career.

Mind Meld: A Vulcan may try to mind meld with a passing ghost to get more information. If so, the Vulcan will gain an image of a spirit sitting on a huge throne, along with other images of terror which defy description.

Follow the Leader: They could follow the ghosts into a building, where they will find empty rooms and halls resembling a university. If the PCs continue exploring, wandering from building to building, they eventually find a spirit which sits still on a huge throne. This presence on the throne is the only spirit which will talk to them for any length of time. The spirit identifies itself only as the "Abaddon," and explains that the characters will soon join the other spirits in the massive overmind which makes the zone possible. If any character rolls his Trivia: Earth Literature or Trivia: Earth Religions skill successfully, he remembers that Abaddon was the angel in the bottomless pit in the final book of the Bible.

This creature then reveals in his conversation the nature of the zone: It is a giant brain which uses souls, sapient life forms' Psi Potential, as individual cells. The brain acquires more souls to increase its cogitative capacity. Soon, it will be strong enough to begin the assembly of locomotion appendages. Essentially, the zone is a huge creature which is building itself, soul-cell by soul-cell, and its goals are not friendly to humanoid life! Should the characters try to kill the Abaddon, they will find that their phasers do not affect it. In fact, the entire planet is impervious to any physical attack. If the PCs leave the presence of the Abaddon and return to the quad, they will once more meet a throng of moving souls. One of these will be recognizable to anyone who rolls his Trivia: Earth History skill or less on D100 (if no one rolls it, the person with the lowest roll succeeds). Characters who succeed recognize the spirit of Colin Endem.

COLIN ENDEM

Colin was a leader of psi research for the Federation 60 years ago. He pioneered some of the core theories on psi powers in humans and was leader of the Federation Project on Extradimensional and Psionic Research on Rigel. Fifty-eight years ago he disappeared from the Federation and was presumed dead.

Colin will speak to the PCs even if they don't talk to him. He explains that he's trapped here with these other beings, and that the PCs will soon be captured as well. If the PCs have not come up with a plan to free their ship, Colin will suggest that he and the captured crew join their psi strengths together to hold the Abaddon temporarily. While it is held, the ship can escape the zone. The captured crewmembers realize this would spell their eventual deaths, as their bodies will soon fail without their souls.

The PCs may be able to formulate a better plan. While the Abaddon is held, Colin and the crewmembers can take control of the soul-mind and use it to add substance to the Abaddon's body. The *Enterprise* crew can then trap it, using the transporter (beaming it up and then "holding" it in transit). Once the transporter has "captured" it, the crew can disperse/kill it by scattering it, one atom at a time, throughout space.

CONCLUSION

Once enough of the Abaddon is dispersed/dead, the souls it has collected will disappear to wherever souls are supposed to go. The souls of any crew whose bodies are in a coma will return to the bodies. If a soul's body has died or been seriously injured, the person will not recover. The zone will dissolve once the Abaddon is dead. The visage of Colin Endem will appear on the bridge and thank the PCs for their assistance. His last words will be, "May you each find your own inner peace." Ω





visitors to F.I.L.T.H. are overwhelmed by size, noise, darkness, flashes of intense color, heat, and humidity. Large carts full of bundled laundry are emptied, sorted, sacked, laundered, dried, starched, ironed, folded, packaged, and placed back in carts to be delivered. The din of rumbling dryers and the surging of agitated water is punctuated with deafening buzzes, horn blasts, and ringing signals. Infrared masses labor at tables in the tropical air like black worker ants among a few red-uniformed supervisors. Occasionally, an ironbot, a higher ranking technician, or a service group manager will walk through the vast facility.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

F.I.L.T.H. is divided into two major adjoining sections, Regular Load and Special Load, each measuring 36 meters wide by 60 meters at the deepest point of a curved wall. The ceiling, with inadequate, flickering lights, is supported by rectangular pillars standing six meters apart.

Collection Area: The two sections share a common collection area measuring 32 meters wide by 42 meters long. The collection area usually contains about eight wheeled carts being unloaded by eight infrared drones into approximately 72 piles in eight different colors. At one end of the collection area are 18 color-coded tables with white at the extreme left and right. The two center tables are both painted black. An infrared laborer works at each table preparing and pretreating laundry. At each side of the collection area is a row of seven two-meter-wide rooms for storing packaging materials, starch, rags to be recycled, mending materials, new stock, and prewash stain remover. There is also an administrative office.

Wash, Rinse and Dry: The wash, rinse, and dry area in both sections is semicircular, with an 18-meter radius. Wiring and pipes run between the raised floor in a one-meter-high crawlspace above the subflooring.

The area is curved 180° for two reasons. One, there is far more low security clearance level laundry than high security clearance level laundry, so more machines are needed for infrared laundry than ultraviolet. Two, the same laundry carts that deliver soiled laundry return clean laundry, so it is easy to have them exit near their entrance.

Cranes: Nine crane tracks curve around the semicircular ceiling directly above all machines of the same security clearance. A single hoist controlled by a tethered remote control box lifts, lowers, and transports loads from the preparing and pretreating area to the wash, rinse, dry, and inspection areas. A single infrared citizen moves loads between each of the five stations as signaled by a series of red and green lights (plus buzzers, bells, and horns which can be heard above the roar of the machinery). No hoist can be moved to another security clearance level

● At size sorting there are approximately 33 piles of black, red, and orange (or gray, pink, and pastel orange undergarments) laundry on the floor. Laundry here is constantly being sorted by the approximately nine infrared workers at a time who deliver and return the laundry carts.

● At starch spray there are only two tables—a violet and a white. One infrared laborer works at each of these tables with a sprayer.

● At ironing there are four ironing tables covered with blue, indigo, violet, and white clothes. One red-colored, plate-armored ironbot irons at each table.

● At packaging, the tables and packages are yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet, and white. One infrared laborer packs at each table.

● At delivery, all colors of laundry cart are available except white. Approximately nine infrared laborers circulate among the wheeled carts.

● At special delivery are white packages and yellow bundles of registered mutant stripes. One infrared laborer works at special delivery.

Fully Integrated Laundry Treatment Headquarters



A DOA Sector Adventure Setting

By Merle M. Rasmussen

track, because laundry sacks could be detached from a hoist and placed in the wrong machines. This would likely miscolor the sack's contents.

Limited Laundry Services: Because of the high volume of low-clearance level laundry, certain laundry services are only available for particular security clearance level laundry. Because of this disparity there are various numbers of color-coded tables and shelves in each service area.

● At inspection there are eight tables, red through white with no black. An infrared laborer inspects at each table.

● At restock there are eight sets of shelves, red through white with no black. The shelves in the Regular Load section contain new color-coded uniforms and industrial apparel. The shelves in the Special Load section carry new white undergarments, bed linen, and other hygienic cloth materials. One infrared laborer is stationed at each of the eight sets of shelves.

● At mending there are seven tables with sewing materials. The tables are orange through white with no black or red. One infrared laborer toils at each table.

ALPHA COMPLEX MUNICIPAL CODE

F.I.L.T.H. is dedicated to provide each citizen and service group with quality laundry care. This facility is also efficiently designed to provide timely fabric repair and replacement if necessary.

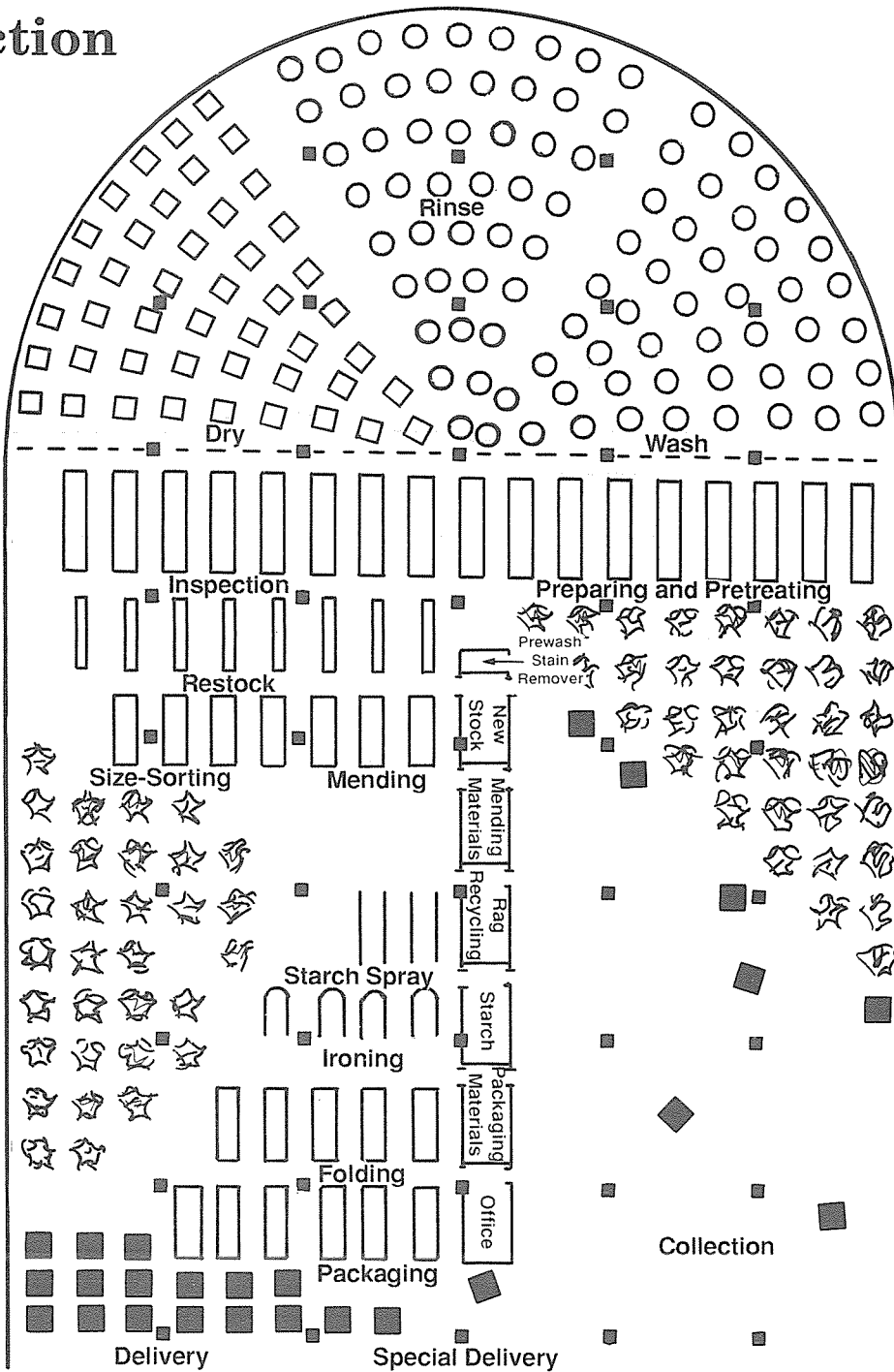
THE REAL SCOOP

F.I.L.T.H. provides laundry care in direct relation to the security clearance of the citizen. The clothing of infrared citizens is harshly washed and scorched dry. It is never mended, starched, ironed, folded, or packaged. Service improves as security clearance approaches ultraviolet, including stain pretreatment, fabric softener, and special delivery.










HISTORICAL NOTE

F.I.L.T.H. replaced the Modern Automated Laundry Facility Utilizing the New Computer Timed and Integrated Operating Network (M.A.L.F.U.N.C.T.I.O.N.) after the Computer discovered all laundry was being treated equally regardless of security clearance.

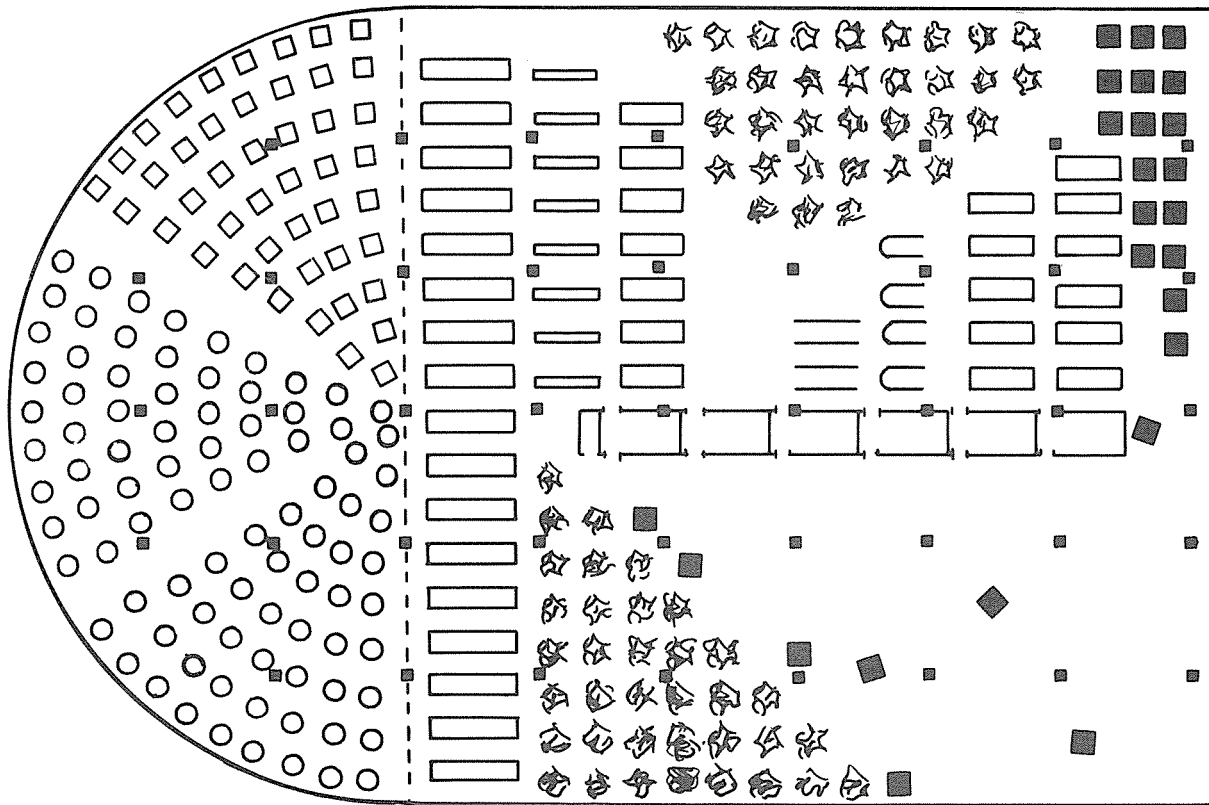
Regular Load Section



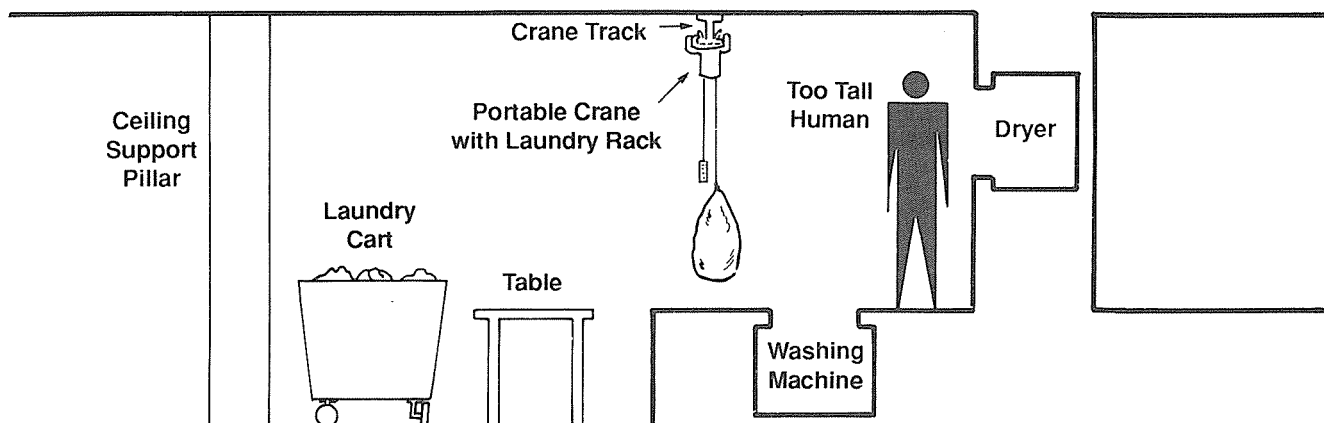
Key

- | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|---------------|
|  | Ceiling support pillar |  | Dryer |  | Elevation |
|  | Wheeled laundry cart |  | Room with doorway |  | Table |
|  | Piled laundry |  | Washing or rinsing machine |  | Ironing table |

Special Load Section (Mirror Image of Regular Load Section)



F.I.L.T.H. Cross Section



MAJOR NPCS

May-R and Ken-R are in charge of this complex facility. They spend most of their time in their respective administrative offices doing efficiency reports and ordering supplies. Occasionally they call in authorities from various Service Groups when equipment breaks down or various objects are found. For game purposes their statistics are the same.

May-R-TAG-1 (Regular Load Section Administrator) **Ken-R-WRT-2 (Special Load Section Administrator)**

Description: Small, athletic frame, always smiling, suspiciously happy.

Service Group: Production, Logistics, and Commissary Service Group (PLC).

Arms and Armor: Six grenades (P8), skill 12; laser pistol (all colors of striped barrels) (L8), skill 10.

Secret Society: Death Leopard, 4th degree (due to supplying equipment).

Mutant Power: Pyrokinesis (a frightening power in the middle of a cloth-filled work area).

Relevant Skills: Spurious logic 18.

Background: It didn't take long for May-R and Ken-R to realize that 144 infrared workers searching the pockets of every citizen in DOA sector were likely to turn over a treasure trove of extremely useful items. The trick was to return enough found items to the proper authorities to be above suspicion while channeling an endless supply of useful equipment to their secret society. It was easy to keep greedy infrared drones happy and quiet by allowing them to keep a large quantity of worthless items neither the authorities nor the Death Leopards want.

Anytime there are intruders in F.I.L.T.H. which 144 infrared drones and eight ironbots can't handle, May-R and Ken-R call in two heavily armed internal security infrared troopers per each intruder.

MINOR NPCS

The only minor NPCs you meet here are ordinary infrared drones and ironbots. There is one infrared laborer for each cart, table (except for ironing tables where ironbots work), set of shelves, or hoisting crane in each service area of both the Regular and Special Load sections. This means there are 144 infrared members of the unwashed masses and eight ironbots at F.I.L.T.H.

Typical Ironbot

Description: Humanoid, except for a right arm which ends in a steam iron (used to press clothing). Red security clearance.

Arms and Armor: Steam iron (treat as a heated club), skill 18; plate armor.

Relevant Skills: Perfect pleats.

Background: Ironbots are a forgotten

'bot leftover from M.A.L.F.U.N.C.T.I.O.N. (pre-F.I.L.T.H.). They will take direct orders from the Computer and anyone wearing red. (May-R and Ken-R do not know this and think the eight ironbots are totally under their control. Troubleshooters may discover this fact only by accident, perhaps while shouting orders during a firefight).

WHAT HAPPENS HERE

(Okay, I admit it. Whatever happens to dirty laundry is well...just plain boring. The average short-lived troubleshooter clone is more concerned with avenues of fire and where to dive for cover than the nitty-gritty details of pretreating nasty stains. But, for the avid referee who knows a particularly sensitive item is about to encounter the turbulence of a wash cycle, the following information is invaluable. It also works well for informing troubleshooters [unconscious or otherwise] inside laundry carts or laundry sacks what happens to their particular hiding place. In the interest of not boring the reader with all these sundry details, I suggest you skip ahead to What Really Happens until you need to know how dirty laundry is routinely handled in F.I.L.T.H.)

Collecting: Collection area wheeled carts containing various sized and tagged bundles of soiled laundry are brought in from living quarters, bathing facilities, industrial areas, and health facilities. These carts are emptied onto the collection area floor in somewhat color-coded order. The empty carts are then wheeled to the delivery area to be reloaded with clean laundry.

Sorting: Piled bundles are dragged toward sorting tables in the preparing and pretreating area. Bundles containing jumpsuits and industrial apparel are put on a set of tables to the left. These bundles will be laundered in the Regular Load section. Bundles containing undergarments, bed linen, towels, health services materials, and other hygienic cloth items are put in another set of tables to the right. These bundles will be laundered in the Special Load section.

Preparing: Obvious loose dirt is shaken from most laundry. Lint is brushed from blue, indigo, violet, and white laundry. Zippers, hooks, and eyes are closed to prevent snags on indigo, violet, and white laundry. Stains on violet and white laundry are pretreated with stain remover. Pockets on Technical Services coveralls and Research and Development lab coats are emptied and whatever is found is returned by a heavily armored bot to that service group. Valuable private articles which fall from pockets are usually confiscated by the finder instead of being turned in to recycling as required by the Computer. (See What Really Happens for details on items found). Treasonous or dangerous objects are usually reported to Internal Security for further investigation.

PARANOIA

Bagging: Tags are checked and laundry of the same security clearance is sorted into large, loosely knit laundry sacks of the same color. Yellow registered mutant stripes are removed from bundles to be sacked with yellow laundry. Infrared laundry is most prevalent and is stuffed into black sacks. Ultraviolet material is least prevalent and is carefully placed inside white sacks. When a dry, black laundry sack is full it weighs about 45 kilograms (100 pounds). It weighs 90 kilograms (200 pounds) wet. (Add the weight of any troubleshooters hiding/hidden inside a sack). White sacks usually contain the clothing of a single ultraviolet citizen and may weigh as little as five kilograms (11 pounds) dry.

Washing: The sacks are hoisted by portable cranes which run on ceiling tracks from the preparing and pretreating area to the wash area. The slick floors of the wash area contribute moisture to the churning fog in this area (hint, hint). Each sack is lowered into an open pit in the floor beside a green signal light. The pit is then filled with 0.2 to 1.0 meter of water. In the Regular Load section, this wash water is warm and mixed with detergent. In the Special Load section, this wash water is scalding hot and mixed with bleach. The bleach also serves as a disinfectant. The length of time washing takes is varied by the Computer to adjust for color, amount and type of soil, and energy conservation. The depth of the water is adjusted automatically for the size of the load.

Rinsing: After approximately 10 minutes of agitation, a loud buzzer sounds and a red light comes on at the finished washing pit. The steaming sack of material is hoisted out of the pit and transported to an open pit with a green light in the rinse area. The rinsing pit is filled with water. In the Regular Load section this rinse is cold. In the Special Load section this rinse is warm.

Drying: After approximately 10 minutes of additional agitation and drainage a loud bell rings and a red light comes on. The sack is hoisted out and transported to a large horizontal tumbling dryer in the drying area marked with a green light. In both the Regular and Special Load sections black, red, and orange sacks are dried scorching hot with fabric softener thrown in. Indigo, violet, and white sacks are dried warm with a fabric softener added. The extremely humid air in the drying area may cause breathing difficulty.

After 30 minutes of tumbling in a dryer a horn sounds and a red light comes on. Black sacks go directly to the size-sorting area where the contents are dumped out on the lint-covered floor. All other sacks go to the inspection area where they are dumped out on the tables.

Summary: In short, the wash, rinse, and dry routine is as follows:

1. Sack is hoisted from preparing and pretreating area to wash area.
2. Sack is lowered into pit with green light.
3. Warm or hot water pours into pit.
4. Washer agitates for 10 minutes.
5. Buzzer sounds, red light comes on, and sack is hoisted out of pit and transported to rinse area.
6. Sack is lowered into pit with green light.
7. Cold or warm water pours into and fills pit.
8. Agitation for 10 minutes.
9. Bell rings, red light comes on, and sack is hoisted out of pit and transported to drying area.
10. Sack is stuffed into horizontal dryer with green light.
11. Sack is tumbled with scorching hot or warm air for 30 minutes.
12. Horn sounds, red light comes on, and sack is either dumped out on floor or table.

Post-Wash Treatment: Red laundry is never mended, but if it is too ragged to pass inspection it is sent to recycling and the discarded item is instantly replaced from restock with a new piece of the same size and color. Orange laundry needing repair is either sent to the mending area or discarded

to recycling and replaced by restock. All red and orange laundry is then transported to the size sorting area.

Dry yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet, and white sacks are also dumped out on specific tables in the inspection area. Damaged goods are either transported to mending or discarded to recycling and replaced by restock.

Mutant stripes are separated from the other yellow laundry. All inspected yellow laundry is transported to the packaging area.

Inspected green laundry is sent to the folding area. After folding, green laundry is sent to the packaging area.

Inspected blue and indigo laundry is sent to the ironing area. Here bed linen, medical fabric, and all blue, indigo, violet, and white clothing is pressed flat by ironbots programmed for the tedious job. After ironing, blue and indigo is sent to folding and later packaging.

Inspected violet and white laundry is sent to the starch spray area. Bed linen, medical fabric, and all violet and white clothing receives a starch treatment which makes everything touched by the solution look crisp. After starching, violet and white laundry is sent to ironing, folding, and then packaging.

In the size sorting area black, red, and orange undergarments are all piled according to size and gender. It is easy to tell the difference in security clearance level because these undergarments are now colored gray, pink, and pastel orange. The Computer had long ago decided that there should be nine sizes of clothing to fit all sizes of citizens.

Cleverly, the Computer also realized there were anatomical differences between citizens, so all undergarments can be sorted into one of 18 different piles.

Jumpsuits are more unisex in design, and there are only nine different size piles. Industrial apparel, which includes environmental protection suits of various types, comes in three adult sizes: small, medium, and large. Infrared troopers wear a distinctive costume of tight, leather-like pants and a jacket in one large size. Technical Services personnel wear special coveralls amply supplied with tool pockets in three sizes. Armed Forces elite personnel, like members of the Vulture Squadrons, receive the finest and most distinctive uniforms in three sizes. On the average there are usually 33 different piles on the floor at any one time. This number of piles constantly fluctuates as various services launder their industrial apparel and piles are bundled up to be sent to delivery.

Delivery: After size-sorting and packaging, all laundry, except ultraviolet and registered mutant stripes, is transported to delivery. At delivery it is sorted into wheeled carts. From delivery it is wheeled to living quarters, industrial areas, service group commissaries, bathing facilities, and health centers. Individual clothing and clean laundry is dispersed at those distant points.

White ultraviolet laundry and yellow registered mutant stripes are transported to special delivery. From special delivery the clean laundry is delivered directly to the private accommodations of the ultraviolet citizen or living quarters of the registered mutant.

Laundry Services Chart

Refer to the Laundry Services Chart to determine which security clearances receive which laundry services following collection.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENS

From time to time a valuable, dangerous, or treasonous object is discovered in the laundry. Most times it is discovered in preparing and pretreating area. Occasionally it is missed and is discovered later. Some chemicals react violently with cold, warm, or hot water. Some objects do not like to be agitated, tumbled, or dumped out on a hard table or floor. Some objects are not affected by the laundering process.

Valuable objects are usually confiscated by the infrared citizens who work here. Objects which infrared citizens think are valuable may be dangerous or treasonous.

Dangerous Objects: Dangerous objects can include weapons, ammunition, chemical agents, biological specimens, radioactive materials, and ordinary objects like glass which breaks while being laundered. If dangerous objects are discovered before they ignite, explode, or dissolve, the appropriate service group is immediately called to come

Laundry Services

Service	Infrared	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Indigo	Violet	Ultraviolet
Dirt shake	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lint brush						X	X	X	X
Snag prevent							X	X	X
Stain pretreat								X	X
Warm wash*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cold rinse**	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hot dry	X	X	X						
Hot dry with softener				X	X	X			
Warm dry with softener							X	X	X
Inspection		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Replacement		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mending			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Size sorting†	X	X	X						
Starch spray††								X	X
Ironing‡						X	X	X	X
Folding					X	X	X	X	X
Packaging				X	X	X	X	X	X
General delivery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Special delivery									X
Average Sack Weight (kg)									
Dry	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5
Wet	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10

*In the special load section this is hot wash. **In the special load section this is warm rinse.

†In the special load section size sorting is mostly for undergarments. ††In the special load section starch spray is for bed linen. ‡In the special load section ironing is for bed linen.

Random Laundry Contents (By Security Clearance Color) with Random Citizen Possessions (00-19)

Roll	Item	Cost (in Credits)	Roll	Item	Cost (in Credits)
Black (Infrared) (Zeroes)			Green (Fifties)		
00	Teela-O-MLY-1 pocket mirror	?	50	Hand laser barrel (green stripe)	50
01	Paper clip	0	51	Com unit II (orange)	500
02	Adhesive bandage	0	52	Green living quarters key	?
03	Metal washer	0	53	Sonic weapon power pack (orange)	75
04	Metal screw	0	54	Blaster reload (orange)	50
05	Spoon	0	55	Stun gun energy pack (orange)	100
06	Comb	0	56	Infrared multicorder microchip (orange)	100
07	Hair net	0	57	Radar multicorder microchip (orange)	100
08	Button	0	58	Dead reckoning multicorder microchip (orange)	100
09	Pliers	0	59	Translator multicorder microchip (orange)	100
Black (Infrared) (Tens)			Blue (Sixties)		
10	Hand laser barrel (black stripe)	50	60	Hand laser barrel (blue stripe)	50
11	Screwdriver	0	61	Toxic analysis multicorder microchip (orange)	100
12	String (one meter)	0	62	Blue living quarters key	?
13	Whetstone	0	63	X-ray multicorder microchip (orange)	100
14	Rubberband	0	64	Visible light multicorder microchip (orange)	100
15	Fork	0	65	Radio/radar multicorder microchip (orange)	100
16	'Bot bolt	0	66	Lie detector multicorder microchip (orange)	100
17	Handkerchief	0	67	Self-destruct multicorder microchip (orange)	100
18	Rubber eraser	0	68	Recorder multicorder microchip (orange)	100
19	Scissors	0	69	Disease analysis multicorder microchip (orange)	100
Red (Twenties)			Indigo (Seventies)		
20	Hand laser barrel (red stripe)	50	70	Hand laser barrel (indigo stripe)	50
21	Field telephone (red)	100	71	'Bot damage analysis multicorder microchip (orange)	100
22	Suntan lotion (red)	1	72	Indigo living quarters key	?
23	Notebook and stylus (red)	?	73	Life form recognition multicorder microchip (orange)	100
24	Utility belt and pouches (red)	?	74	Smoke gas slugthrower Shell (yellow)	20
25	Test tube with stopper (red)	2	75	Energy pistol reload (yellow)	50
26	Mosquito netting (one square meter) (red)	5	76	Solid-slug slugthrower shell (yellow)	10
27	Insect repellant (red)	2	77	Flare slugthrower shell (yellow)	25
28	Rations compact (red)	10	78	Dirt slugthrower shell (yellow)	20
29	Piton (red)	2	79	Tangler reload (green)	100
Orange (Thirties)			Violet (Eighties)		
30	Hand laser barrel (orange stripe)	50	80	Hand laser barrel (violet stripe)	50
31	Shielded field telephone (red)	150	81	Dumdum slugthrower shell (green)	50
32	Camera, miniature (red)	50	82	Violet living quarters keys on keyring	?
33	Personal hygiene kit (red)	30	83	Corrosion gas slugthrower shell (green)	80
34	Nail, common (red)	0	84	Vomit gas slugthrower shell (green)	45
35	Lighter, hand (red)	1	85	Radioactivity multicorder microchip (green)	100
36	Hand lens (red)	15	86	Psi phenomena multicorder microchip (green)	100
37	Flashlight, miniature (red)	3	87	Poison gas slugthrower shell (green)	70
38	Compass (red)	10	88	Needle gun reload (blue)	200
39	Chapstick (red)	1	89	HE slugthrower shell (blue)	30
Yellow (Forties)			White (Ultraviolet) (Nineties)		
40	Hand laser barrel (yellow stripe)	50	90	Hand laser barrel (white stripe)	50
41	Com unit I (red)	100	91	Pocket assay (blue)	300
42	Brass knuckles (red)	?	92	Ultraviolet living quarters keys on key chain	?
43	First aid kit (red)	10	93	AP slugthrower shell (blue)	45
44	Telephone wire (10 meters) (red)	1	94	HEAT slugthrower shell (blue)	35
45	Plasticord (synthetic rope, one meter) (red)	2	95	Napalm slugthrower shell (blue)	40
46	Supergum and solvent (red)	?	96	Gauss gas slugthrower shell (blue)	30
47	Knife (red)	10	97	Hallucinogenic gas slugthrower shell (indigo)	70
48	Throwing knife (red)	15	98	ECM slugthrower shell (indigo)	100
49	Grenade (red)	50	99	Gauss gun energy pack (indigo)	100

claim the object. Tools and spare parts are often found in Technical Services coveralls. Unidentifiable and dangerous objects are often found in Research and Design lab coats. If the proper service group to contact is unknown, Internal Security usually sends in a jackobot bomb disposal team.

Treasonous Objects: Internal Security is immediately called when unidentifiable (probably from the Outdoors or R&D) or obviously treasonous objects (wrong security clearance, Commie, mutant, or secret society) are found. Technical Services is called anytime a washing, rinsing, or drying machine ceases to function.

Random Object Generation: To determine at any moment the lost item in a single pile or laundry sack, or the item which an infrared worker has confiscated, refer to the Random Laundry Content Chart. The chart is organized by security clearance color. For example, if an infrared worker handles yellow laundry, look at the forties section of the chart and roll a random number from 0 to 9 to determine the ones digit. If a 5 is rolled, the result is 45, which corresponds to one meter of plasticord (synthetic rope) found either on the infrared's person or in the yellow laundry he or she is currently handling. There are two columns of black (infrared) laundry items corresponding to the random numbers 00 through 19. These two columns of the Random Laundry Content

Chart are known as the Random Citizen Personal Possession Chart. A single 20-sided die can be rolled to determine the random pocket or utility belt pouch contents of a citizen of any security clearance. When searching any room of F.I.L.T.H. or the pockets of May-R or Ken-R, roll a number in the range 00 through 99 to determine hidden items recovered from the laundry. All F.I.L.T.H. workers will deny stealing any discovered item and will claim they are planning to take the item to recycling at the end of the daycycle.

Note: Since this is *Paranoia*, you should describe, but not name, items with a higher security clearance than the troubleshooter possesses. (Item security clearance colors appear in parentheses after the name of the item). The troubleshooter should not readily recognize the true value and purpose of unfamiliar objects. An item's actual purpose may not be discovered until use of that item is attempted or until a knowledgeable high-level secret society member is contacted. The sale of the items to secret societies might be lucrative if the true value of the item is known, otherwise a troubleshooter could be cheated. Items with costs (in credits) given as a question mark are of unknown value—can you say, "negotiable"?

BRIEF SCENARIO HOOKS

Something Went "Boom!": An explosive device has just

detonated inside a red security clearance clothes dryer in the Regular Load section. It is feared by Internal Security that some secret society member, Communist, or troubleshooter purposely or accidentally left an explosive device in their uniform.

Whether the explosion was sabotage or accident is unknown. What is known is that no loyal troubleshooter would have failed to turn in an explosive device following a mission. Your mission is to investigate the destroyed dryer. Try to determine if the explosive was issued from inside or outside the complex. If sabotage is suspected, attempt to find the secret soci-

ety responsible. If it was an accident, try to find the troubleshooter who did not turn in all his issued and unused explosives.


Working in the Laundry Line: As punishment for botching up yet another troubleshooter mission, the Computer sentences the survivors to work a weekcycle in F.I.L.T.H. Unfortunately for troubleshooters, infrared workers don't particularly care for outsiders on their lucrative turf and—oops, you've got to watch those slick spots beside those large-capacity wash and rinse machines. Those swinging laundry sacks and tipping laundry carts can be hazardous if your back is turned. Sorry citizen, didn't see you standing near the edge of that slippery dropoff.

Getting a Disguise: Laundry is a superb place to find that color of uniform your secret society needs. Wearing the proper color allows secret society members to perform that special little mission they've been planning for months. There are only a few minor complications no one happened to mention you—like, how does one confiscate a white ultraviolet uniform with a bright yellow registered mutant stripe in front of 152 infrared drones? What size of uniform is needed? (They come in three sizes.) Won't the high programmer the uniform belongs to wonder why it's taking so long for her laundry to come back from the cleaners? Don't all Internal Security personnel recognize female ultraviolet registered mutant high programmers on sight?

Resisting Arrest: Have you ever tried to apprehend a heavily armed group of traitors for execution? I guess it's just the nature of enemies of the people to resist capture. The problem is traitors have been banding together lately, making their arrest even more difficult. It has been discovered by Internal Security that traitors recently declared by the Computer gravitate toward the laundry area. It is believed they are met in a room of F.I.L.T.H. (perhaps recycling) by another traitor who leads them to the hiding traitor group.

This traitor group is believed to be a new secret society or one sponsored by an established secret society. Since the Computer informs Internal Security (and not the general public) of the name of the traitor to be apprehended, Internal Security could announce any name. They have decided to announce your name as a traitor and let you run to the laundry area. Inside, you will undoubtedly be met by someone who will lead you to the traitor group. Once inside the group you can determine if they are a new secret society or just a group sponsored by a known secret society.

If they are being sponsored, find out the secret society's name and connections with this group. Then report back to Internal Security, and they will call your name off the traitor list (you hope). Ω



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CHALLENGE

Briefs

DESERT SHIELD FACT BOOK is GDW's new information book about the Persian Gulf crisis.

FULL MOON DRAW (*Torg*) and *Star Wars Miniatures Rules* are new this month from West End Games. Other recent releases include *The GodNet* and *The Cyberpapacy* for *Torg*.

SPACE: 1889 CLUE BOOK is now available from Paragon Software.

THE GAME'S AFOOT is a new RPG newsletter featuring reviews, letters, and features. Write to Zirlinson Publishing, 7-8 Mayberry Drive, Watervliet, NY 12189.

GMT GAMES offers three new games: *Silver Bayonet* (Vietnam), *Operation Shoestring* (Guadalcanal) and *Air Bridge to Victory* (Operation Market-Garden). Write GMT Games, 310 W. Lacey, Hanford, CA 93230.

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING presents two new products, *Storypaths: the Path of Horror* and the *Path of Intrigue*.

LIZARDMEN releases this month from Mayfair Games, Inc. This 128-page reference work includes the adventure *Redemption* and *Rebirth*. Also now available is *Vampires*, for use with the *Chill* horror roleplaying game.

RETURN TO DUNWICH (*Call of Cthulhu*) releases in April from Chaosium Inc. Other recent products include *Boy King* (*Pendragon*) and *Dark Designs* (*Call of Cthulhu*).

ICE's April releases include the *WarLaw* boxed set (*Rolemaster* mass combat system), *Rolemaster* boxed set, *Chicago Arcology* (*Cyberspace* campaign sourcebook), *Cyberspace*, and *IQ No. 12*.

DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS (*Runequest* supplement) is new from The Avalon Hill Game Company and Victory Games, Inc. Other spring releases include *Attack Sub*, *Seahawks*, *Tales from the Floating Vagabond*, and *Computer Acquire*.

STARLANCE PUBLICATIONS will release *It's a Gamer's Life* in May. Features

a collection of adventure gaming cartoons from a number of artists, including Joseph Pillsbury, Richard Tomasic, Darvin Davis, and James B. King. Write to StarLance Publications, 50 Basin Drive, Mesa, WA 99343.

IMAGINATION is a science-fiction/fantasy/horror fanzine published by Synonym Ltd. The April issue will feature Cyberpunk, while June will concentrate on computer simulations and space FRPGs (with two **MegaTraveller** scenarios). Write to *Imagination*, 63 Beeches Crescent, Crawley, West Sussex, ENGLAND, RH10 6BU.

TALES OF THE DARK AGES, a collection of *Ars Magica* fantasy roleplaying adventures, is available from Atlas Games. Includes *Tongue of Vipers*, *The Inheritance*, *Copse of Skulls*, and *The Ghoul of St. Lazare*.

DECISION GAMES (formerly Cummins Enterprises) features *Fire & Movement*, *Wargamer*, and *Moves*, wargaming news and information magazines. Write Decision Games, PO Box 1289, Salinas, CA 93902.

FANTASY FORGE plans to release 25mm buildings and figures, plus 25mm science-fiction vehicles. Write to Stone Mountain Miniatures, Inc., PO Box 594, Broomfield, CO 80038.

HISTORICAL GAMER is a new bimonthly magazine. Write to 1863 S. Limestone, Lexington, KY 40503.

T-K GRAPHICS offers notecards, stickers, ID badges, posters, bookmarks, and more. Write to T-K Graphics, PO Box 1951, Baltimore, MD 21203.

CAR-PGa, the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games, is incorporating as a nonprofit organization for serving the interests of gamers in defense of the hobby, and promoting the hobby to those who do not play but would probably enjoy it. Write to CAR-PGa, 8032 Locust Ave., Miller, IN 46403.

Challenge Briefs describes gaming news and releases from a variety of publishers. Announcements should be sent in at least four months before a product is released, if possible. Write to **Challenge Briefs**, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.

Birth

Announcement

Stuart and Michelle Sturgeon are the proud parents of a son, Joshua Aaron, born January 29, 1991.

The baby weighed 7 pounds, 9 ounces at birth. Mom and baby are doing fine, although Dad isn't sure he'll ever fully recover from the experience.

Joshua was welcomed home by two cats and two dogs, who don't mind the baby as long as he doesn't eat their food. Ω

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Dandrian's Ring

By Chris Hind

The PCs must travel to Dandrian (in the Dandrian star system) where they will meet a retired Imperial admiral who wishes to join the Rebel Alliance. If the PCs don't have their own ship, they are given the use of the *Carpagian*, a battered but serviceable troop transport.

Whenever a task is assigned during this adventure, a range of difficulty numbers (instead of a single number) has been given to allow flexibility. If the characters have low codes (less than 5D) in the skill required for a test, assign a difficulty number from the lower end of the given scale. If the characters have high skill codes (5D+), assign a high number.

DANDRIAN

Characters can learn the following information about the planet Dandrian during their briefing, by a Planetary Systems skill roll, or through interaction with NPCs on Dandrian:

Referred to as "the crossroads of the galaxy," Dandrian is a rather unassuming planet orbiting a bright yellow sun similar to Sol. The planet is about the size of Earth and is surrounded by a ring of asteroids called Dandrian's Ring, the remnants of a moon which struck the planet during its formation. The atmosphere is thick and high in moisture, and the surface is flat and somewhat marshy. Flora includes tropical plants and grasses but no trees. There is no intelligent life native to Dandrian, although its fauna consists of many types of dinosaur-like creatures. The main population center is Lon Drasna, a city which only exists because of its spaceport. Dandrian's location in space (between Dantooine and Bespin, and between Tatooine and Yavin) makes it an excellent stopover, but because the planet is virtually devoid of useful minerals, the Imperials aren't concerned with it. Only spaceport personnel and thieves live in Lon Drasna.

LANDING ON DANDRIAN

Your ship enters the thick, steamy atmosphere of Dandrian, heading for the sprawling cityport of Lon Drasna. As you approach the spaceport, the controller's voice crackles over the radio.

"Carpagian (or insert name of characters' ship), you have clearance to land in Docking Bay 107."

The characters land their ship without incident and reach The Watering Hole, the bar where Admiral Joser has arranged to for them to meet him. The Watering Hole is a dive. The ceiling is hidden by a layer of foul smoke. The single illumination ball hanging from the ceiling dimly lights the main bar. Aliens of all sizes and shapes lounge in semi-darkness. Of Admiral Joser, there is no sign.

The characters' inquiries after the admiral attract some unwanted attention. Each character may make a moderate (11-15) Perception roll to notice the Gamorrean watching them from the shadows. The character who makes such a roll has a very bad feeling about the Gamorrean—like he might be going to inform the Empire about the characters' presence. The Gamorrean is in the process of slipping out the door and into the fog. Once outside, the Gamorrean jumps on a parked swoop and races off. There are two other swoops parked outside, which the characters may "borrow" for the impending chase scene.

THE TROUBLE WITH BIKERS

While two characters chase the escaping informer, any remaining characters will be confronted by the owners of the stolen swoops.

Two nasty and brutish Gamorreans, apparently members of a local swoop gang, step out of the bar. They were looking for a fight and have found one.

Gamorrean Gang Members: DEX 3D, KNO 1D, MEC 1D, PER 2D, STR 4D, TEC 1D. The Gamorreans are armed with clubs.

The Chase is On

Jumping on the "borrowed" swoops, you chase after the Gamorrean. You can barely see him through the thick mist as you speed between, and try to avoid crashing into, formex structures. He has a head start (medium range) but you still have a chance to catch him, considering his bike has a damaged thermal-exhaust stabilizer.

Informer's Swoop: Crew: 1, Passengers: None, Cargo Capacity: 2 kilograms, Speed Code: 4D, Maneuverability: 4D, Body Strength: 1D, Weapons: None, Flight Ceiling: 350 kilometers. The informer's Repulsorlift Operation skill code is 4D.

Characters' Swoops: Crew: 1, Passengers: None, Cargo Capacity: 2 kilograms, Speed Code: 5D, Maneuverability: 4D, Body Strength: 1D, Weapons: None, Flight Ceiling: 350 kilometers.

The characters obviously must prevent the informer from getting away. One method is to force his swoop to crash by shooting at it (increase Blaster difficulty number by 5 due to fog) or by ramming. Run the chase as per the rules on page 34 of the *Star Wars* rulebook, with the following addition. Each round roll 1D, and follow the instructions on the following table:

Swoop Chase Encounters

Roll	Obstacle
1-3	Nothing happens
4-5	An obstruction (a lurching drunk, heap of garbage, or a parked swoop) blocks the street. Unless an easy (6-10) Repulsorlift Operations roll is made, the swoop grazes the obstruction and loses one point of Speed or Maneuverability (equal chance of either).
6	The robed figure tries to lose his tail by turning a corner. A difficult (16-20) Repulsorlift Operations roll is required to avoid crashing (10D damage to the rider).

Swoops are able to operate at up to 350 kilometers above the ground. A character taking his swoop above the buildings has no chance of crashing, and may increase his Repulsorlift Operations code by 1D for this chase only. The informant keeps his swoop at ground level.

If the Gamorrean is captured and questioned, he relates the following information.

1. He was hired by the Imperials to report anyone inquiring about Admiral Joser.

2. The Imperials arrived the day before and took Admiral Joser away.

3. He doesn't know where Admiral Joser was taken.

4. He does know that Sti Groon, a newsmonger, knows everything that goes on in the city and would be willing to relate this information for a price. He will give the PCs directions to Sti Groon's residence.

If the informant gets away, he reports to the Imperials. Some time before the characters leave the planet (preferably when it's really inconvenient), a group of six stormtroopers tries to arrest the PCs.

Stormtroopers: DEX 2D [1D], Blaster 4D [3D], Brawling Parry 4D [3D], Dodge 4D [3D], STR 2D [3D for damage purposes only], Brawl 3D; all other attributes and skills are 2D. The numbers in brackets are the modifications made by stormtrooper armor. The troopers are armed with blaster pistols, which are set on stun.

Information in the Captured! section of Episode 4: Prisonbound describes what happens if the characters are arrested.

Staging Tips: If you can manage it, have both the fight and the chase going on at the same time. Complete one round of the chase scene, and then cut to the fight scene for a round. This technique will increase the excitement and (hopefully) the enjoyment of these two scenes.

PAWNS OF STI GROON

The first problem is finding Sti Groon. If the characters have been given directions by the informant, they will only have to make a very easy (3-5) Streetwise roll. Without directions, the Streetwise roll becomes difficult (16-20). In both cases, the difficulty number can be reduced by one for each 10 credits spent in bribes, buying drinks, etc. One roll may be made each hour. Although there is no time limit, you should make the characters feel as though every second is precious.

Sti Groon's residence is a low formex building with durasteel doors. They slide open without any prompting. "ShhhhhhhhClang."

The building's interior is sparsely furnished and dry. The room is very large, and Sti Groon himself sits atop a pile of cushions, way in the back.

"Greetingssss," he hisses. "Enter Rebelsss, and make yourssselvesss comfortable."

Sti Groon: DEX 3D+2, KNO 5D, Bureaucracy 6D, Streetwise 7D, Languages 6D, Gameboard 6D, MEC 1D, PER 3D+2, Bargain 5D+2, Con 4D+2, Gambling 6D, STR 3D+1, Swimming 8D, TEC 1D+1. Sti Groon hides a hold-out blaster under his pillows.

Talking to Sti Groon: There is a new saying in Lon Drasna: "Nothing without Sti Groon," meaning there is nothing that goes on in the city without Sti Groon knowing about it—and it's true. Sti Groon, the foremost news monger in the galaxy, is frog-like in appearance, complete with bulging eyes and green, wrinkled skin. He is rather lanky and sly looking but is beginning to get lazy. He enjoys games of all types, and frequently bets on the illicit swoop races that occur in town. He has no love for the Empire, but neither does he side with the Rebellion, referring to it as a "goody-goody organisssation."

He knows why the characters have come, and has pertinent information. However, he is unwilling to give away this information for free. After all, this is his job. He wants 5000 credits. Characters may haggle if they wish, although Sti Groon is very hard to bargain with.

If the characters don't have this kind of money, Sti Groon is willing to give the information to them if they partake in a contest. He loves games and will give them a choice of two. The first is for one character and him to play Vrax, the chess game played by Chewbacca and R2-D2 in *Star Wars*. To simulate the game, each contestant rolls his KNO skill or Gameboard subskill (if they have it, as Sti Groon does). The player with the higher roll wins the round. The first contestant to win a total of five rounds wins the game. If Sti Groon loses, he gives away the information for free.

The second contest pits the Rebel's champion against Sti Groon's champion in a gladiatorial-type combat. After the PCs have chosen their champion (one of the characters—no dragging a person off the street), most of the floor in the room pulls back to reveal a 10-meter-square pit. Prowling around the bottom is a Wookiee-sized tyrannosaur with a gaping maw and sharp teeth. Too late, the characters realize this bonecrusher is Sti Groon's champion. The Rebel cham-

pion may pick his weapon from the following list: mace (as club), spear, gaderffii, knife, axe (hatchet), or sword (bayonet). No blasters or lightsabers are allowed.

Bonecrusher: DEX 4D, PER 1D, STR 5D, SP 2D. The bonecrusher attacks with one bite which does 6D damage.

If the Rebel champion wins the duel, Sti Groon congratulates him on his courage and tells the PCs all he knows regarding Admiral Joser.

Sti Groon knows that Admiral Joser is being kept in a top-security prison on Alpha-Omega, the largest asteroid in Dandrian's Ring. This is not a lot of information, but enough to lead the characters to the next episode.

PRISONBOUND

Blasting off from the Lon Drasna spaceport, you head for Dandrian's Ring and Alpha-Omega prison. Your hearts beat more rapidly when you see an Imperial star destroyer come out of hyperspace just as you enter Dandrian's Ring. You have a bad feeling about this.

Traversing the asteroids is rather simple if one is cautious. Set the Starship Piloting difficulty at 3-5. Failure results in striking an asteroid, but the ship takes only 2D damage. The characters may leave their ships in orbit around Alpha-Omega or on the asteroid itself, as it is quite large. Trying to dock in the prison's docking bay could lead to trouble.

The *Carpagian's* lockers hold six spacesuits and rocket packs which could be used to reach the prison. There are two ways in. The first is through the docking bay. Human-sized intruders are too small to be picked up by radar. The second means of access is through a garbage chute on the underside of the asteroid that leads to area 1. The exterior hatch can be opened by force (the hatch has STR of 1D) or by a very easy (3-5) Security roll.

Carpagian

Craft: *Saryabo IV* Pinnacle Scoutcraft

Type: Scout transport

Length: 20 meters

Crew: 2

Passengers: 10

Cargo Capacity: 1000 kilograms

Consumables: 1 month

Hyperdrive Multiplier: [x1]

Sublight Speed: [2D]

Maneuverability: [None]

Hull: [4D]

Weapons:

One Laser Cannon

Fire Control: [2D]

Damage: [4D]

Shields:

Rating: [1D]

The *Saryabo IV* pinnacle scoutcraft was first developed during the final years of the Clone Wars. Now only a few dozen of these ships are in existence. The *Saryabo* was primarily designed to transport elite troops to and from key target areas. To achieve this, it was given a top-notch hyperdrive system and nav computer. Minor offensive and defensive components were also included to ensure the troops reached their destination.



Alpha-Omega Prison

This is a high-security prison used to detain important prisoners until they can be transported to a better facility. The following personnel are based here:

1 Captain-Supervisor: DEX 2D+2, Blaster 4D+2, Brawling Parry 4D+2, Dodge 4D+2, KNO 3D, Bureaucracy 5D, Planetary Systems 4D, Technology 5D, MEC 3D+2, PER 3D+1, Command 6D+1, Search 6D+1, STR 2D+1, Brawl 3D, TEC 3D, Security 5D. The captain-supervisor is armed with a sporting blaster.

2 Lieutenants: DEX 2D+1, Blaster 4D+1, Brawling Parry 4D+1, Dodge 4D+1, STR 2D+1, Brawl 3D+1, PER 2D+1, Command 4D+1. All other attributes and skills are 2D+1. The lieutenants are armed with blaster pistols.

20 Stormtroopers: DEX 2D [1D], Blaster 4D [3D], Brawling Parry 4D [3D], Dodge 4D [3D], STR 2D [3D for damage purposes only], Brawl 3D. All other attributes and skills 2D. The numbers in brackets are the modifications made by Stormtrooper armor. The troopers are armed with blaster pistols.

1 Medical Droid: Medicine 13D. All other attributes and skills 1D.

1 Technician Droid: Technology 3D, Computer Programming/Repair 3D, Starship Repair 3D, General Repair and Construction 7D. All other attributes and skills are 1D.

There is only one prisoner—Admiral Joser. Because the admiral is viewed as a doting old fool, and because of the supposedly secret status of the prison, the security isn't as tight as it should be. Cautious characters should have no trouble extracting the admiral.

Alarms

If an alarm goes off, all human personnel will be on full alert. All remaining stormtroopers will gather in area 14 and then be directed to split into two groups. They begin to search the prison complex, starting at the point where the alarm was triggered. They will have their pistols set on stun and will attempt to capture the characters rather than kill them (for interrogation purposes).

Captured!

There are a few places in this adventure where the characters may be captured. If the capture takes place on Dandrian, the characters will be shuttled to Alpha-Omega prison. They will be

stripped of their weapons and placed in cell B of area 17. If the capture takes place in the Alpha-Omega prison, then the same things will happen, but transport, of course, will not be necessary. The referee should allow the characters a few chances to escape, although this is not within the scope of this adventure.

Location Notes

The description which follows is only the bare bones of Alpha-Omega prison. Feel free to elaborate on it, using the movies and your imagination as guides.

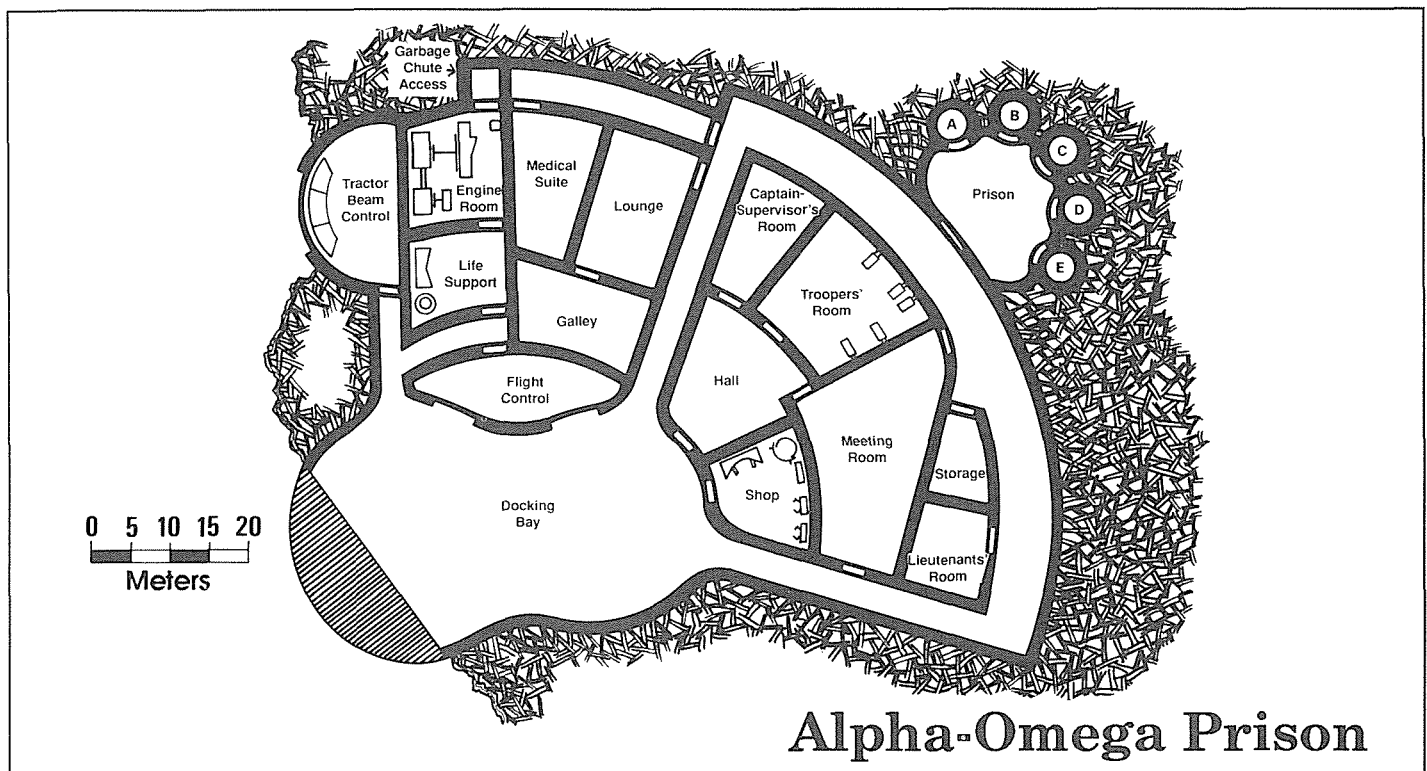
Garbage Chute Access: The exterior garbage hatch leads to this room via the emergency access tunnel in the floor. The hatch in the floor, like the exterior one, can be opened by force or by a very easy (3-5) Security roll. A locker beside the door holds a spacesuit for any sanitary engineer who must unclog the chute.

Engine Room: The power generators and all the machinery to run the prison's offensive and defensive equipment is located in this room.

Life Support: Equipment in this room controls the temperature and oxygen levels in Alpha-Omega prison, the waste-disposal units, and the artificial gravity generator.

Tractor Beam Control: The computer consoles in this room are linked to the tractor beam, which is used in a slightly different way than most. As well as guiding a ship into the docking bay, the tractor beam also pushes the asteroids in Dandrian's Ring to the side, creating a safe access corridor for approaching ships. Two stormtroopers are on duty here. If the characters haven't been to the docking bay yet, they will see (out the portal) an Imperial shuttle and two tie fighters leaving the star destroyer and heading toward Alpha-Omega prison. In this case, the characters get a free round, because the troopers are busy controlling the tractor beam. If the troopers aren't silenced quickly, they will sound the alarm.

Docking Bay: The first time the characters pass through here, there are no ships docked. However, the characters can see that an Imperial shuttle is approaching quickly. This should get the players moving. If this is the second or subsequent visit to this room, the Imperial shuttle will have landed with its two tie escorts and disgorged its passengers. It can be used as an escape vehicle (but the PCs won't get far if the tractor beam has not been deactivated). The name of the shuttle, printed on the side in bold red letters, is *Tyderium*.



Alpha-Omega Prison

Flight Control: One lieutenant is always on duty here monitoring the radar for approaching ships. Because he was monitoring the star destroyer and the shuttle, and because so many asteroids show up on the radar, the characters' approach was not noticed.

Lounge: 1D6 stormtroopers are enjoying their off-duty hours in the lounge playing Vrax or watching vidscreen programs.

Galley: An autochef in this room serves meals twice a day.

Medical Suite: The medical droid stationed here has been programmed to aid anyone who enters the medical suite. There is one rejuvenation tank filled with bacta in the back of the room and a medpac fixed to the wall. Up to three persons may be treated at any one time.

Shop: This crowded room is filled with a machines used to repair anything from droids to spaceships. A technician droid is constantly working on something or other. He has no time for inquisitive guests.

Hall: This room is bare.

Captain-Supervisor's Room: The door to this room is locked. It requires a moderate (11-15) Security roll to open it. If the roll fails, an alarm sounds. Other than the regular furnishings, nothing is here.

Troopers' Room: Twenty retractable cots sleep all of the troopers. At any given time, there are 1D6 sleeping stormtroopers.

Meeting Room: This room is used by the captain-supervisor and his lieutenants and any important guests as a meeting room.

Lieutenants' Room: The two lieutenants share this room. There is nothing of real use here.

Storage: All types of equipment (including explosives, but no weapons) are stored in here. If a character says he wants to find something in here, have him Search for it with a difficulty of 10.

Prison: Three stormtrooper guards are always on duty in this room behind a circular control console which gives them some cover (+5 to Blaster difficulty number). They are never surprised, and will try to sound the alarm. To open the cell doors, the characters must make a difficult (16-20) Security roll. Failure results in the alarm going off.

Cells A-E: The cells are all the same, furnished with only a retractable cot. Admiral Joser is being held in cell A.

Admiral Joser: DEX 2D+2, Blaster 3D+2, Dodge 3D+2, KNO 3D, Alien Races 5D, Bureaucracy 7D, Cultures 6D, Languages 6D, Planetary Systems 7D, Imperial Technology 10D, Imperial Procedures 10D+2, MEC 3D+2, Astrogation 8D+2, PER 3D+1, Command 10D+1, Search 5D+2, STR 2D+1, TEC 3D, Imperial Security 10D.

Admiral Joser is a human of advanced years. He is as thin and stooped and as wrinkled as Yoda. His appearance conceals his experience. He graduated from the academy at the top of his class, and by the end of the Clone Wars, he was already a captain. He retired to an Imperial resort world only a year ago, but during that year he learned much about the evils of the Empire of which he had been previously unaware. What he discovered was enough to make him want to join the Rebellion. Admiral Joser seems absent-minded and babbling, but he is also highly competent when he wants to be.

Staging Tips: As soon as the characters have released Admiral Joser, you should increase the tension of the escape by referring frequently to the sound of approaching stormtroopers. If the characters have set off the alarm, this will not all be a bluff.

It is also time for the characters to see the occupant of the shuttle docked in the bay, none other than the Dark Lord of the Sith himself. He had come to personally escort Joser to the Emperor for questioning. An appropriate encounter with Lord Vader would be for the characters to see him stride into the docking bay with a group of stormtroopers just as they take off in the *Tyderium*.

OBLIGATORY SPACE DOGFIGHT

Unless the characters thought to sabotage the two TIE fighters in the docking bay, the following will occur:

Your ship blasts off from Alpha-Omega prison, and by rights you are home free. But things are rarely that simple. Two tie fighters are in pursuit as you use every ounce of concentration to maneuver through Dandrian's

Ring. Worse, the star destroyer is moving into attack position. Your only hope is to hold out until you can make the jump to light speed. Admiral Joser offers to punch up the coordinates while you fight off the TIE fighters.



Every pilot has to make a very difficult (21-30) Starship Piloting roll each round to avoid crashing into asteroids. A crash causes the ship to take 4D damage. This added danger is to increase the tension of the encounter—you should try to avoid killing the characters. If they are doing too well, however, you can allow the star destroyer to take potshots or have a few more tie fighters fly in to attack. This episode ends when the characters make the jump to light speed. The successful completion of this adventure should be worth five skill points, modified for roleplaying and creativity as the referee sees fit. Any Force points spent from the time the PCs release Admiral Joser to the end of the adventure should be considered dramatically appropriate. Ω

TIE/In Fighters

Craft: Twin Ion Engine/In Starfighter

Crew: 1

Passengers: None

Hyperdrive Multiplier: [None]

Nav Computer: [No]

Hyperdrive Backup: [None]

Sublight Speed: [5D]

Maneuverability: [2D]

Hull: [2D]

Weapons:

Two Laser Cannons (fire linked)

Fire Control: [2D]

Damage: [5D]

Shields:

Rating: [None]

Tyderium

Craft: Lambda-class Shuttle

Type: Space shuttle

Length: 20 meters

Crew: 2

Passengers: 20

Cargo Capacity: 3000 kg

Consumables: 1 month

Hyperdrive Multiplier: [x2]

Nav Computer: [Yes]

Hyperdrive Backup: [Yes]

Sublight Speed: [3D]

Maneuverability: [None]

Hull: [4D]

Weapons:

Four Laser Cannons (fire linked)

Fire Control: [3D]

Damage: [6D]

One Rear-Mounted Laser Cannon

Fire Control: [2D]

Damage: [4D]

Shields:

Rating: [2D]

WUJ

By Christopher King

The Wuj system marks the farthest advance of TOG legions into Shannendam County. It is located less than 70 light-years from the industrial center of Ope'Diar, and would put the county seat of Defiance behind the front lines should it fall. Wuj is a strategically important system and is being defended as such. Currently, the Commonwealth has the 3467th KessRith Legion, the 2356th B'ekkal Legion and the elite 214th Renegade Strike Legion (the Winter Wolves) deployed on the planet. The TOG forces, the 2154th and 983rd Strike Legions and the 4359th Infantry Legion, control half of the southern continent and a large fraction of the northern continent (see the section on the planet, below).

The Commonwealth forces have been able to contain the TOG legions to that hemisphere, though at some cost. The 3467th KessRith has been recently rotated on-planet to relieve the badly beaten 999th Minerva Armored Legion, which was mauled during the last TOG attempt to increase its hold on the northern continent. The naval units of both sides continually attempt to disrupt the flow of traffic to the ground forces. While the Commonwealth/Renegade Legion navies dominate space in most of the system, a growing Imperial naval presence challenges this supremacy almost daily.

The arctic conditions of Wuj have prevented the major set piece battles that occur at other places in the county. Combat is usually restricted to cohort-sized or smaller units fighting skirmishes. The elements are as much an enemy on Wuj as the other side. Often entire centuries are unable to conduct operations due to equipment failure. The frigid climate and increased naval activities by both sides mean that the troops on Wuj will not have many days of peace and inactivity.

OCTOBER 25, 6830, WUJ

Fighting on the northern continent of Wuj is characterized by small-scale combat and long periods of inaction due to the very hostile climate. On warm days in the summer, the temperature may actually reach as high as -13° C. The numbing cold affects both side's equipment equally. Fighting has settled into short probing actions and occasional thrust/counterthrusts, with the bulk of the time spent huddling around fusion heaters, trying to stay warm. Each century is assigned a certain area of the front, and covers its assignment from a bunker that

doubles as a repair shed and shelter from the elements. Frequent raids on these bunkers keep both sides on their toes, as the destruction of an installation opens a gap in the lines that must be covered before the enemy can exploit it.

SPECIAL RULES

- Due to the toughness of the permafrost, any time a vehicle fires a digging charge, roll a die. If a 1 or 2 is rolled, the digging charge did not create a crater large enough to shelter the tank or any infantry. Mark off one digging charge, but do not place a crater marker on the board.

- Whenever a laser is fired, roll one die. If a 1 is rolled, then roll the die again. If a 5 or less is rolled on the second roll, then the laser focussing crystal explodes due to structural defects brought on by the extreme cold. The laser is destroyed, and the vehicle takes internal damage (starting on the row just below the last armor row) equal to one 150mm APDS round either in the turret or front position, depending on where the laser is located. This damage is resolved before any other damage in that turn.

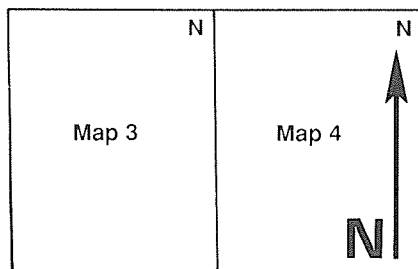
- Whenever a missile is fired, roll one die. If a 1 is rolled, then the missile misfires and is lost, without any adverse affect on the firing unit.

- Each installation has one medium mortar squad. The rules for medium mortars are in the article "Beefing Up the PBI" by Rich Ostorero, found in **Challenge 45**. If this article is not available, then replace the medium mortar squad with two bounce infantry squads armed with mortars.

- At the end of the campaign, total the victory levels for the three scenarios. Decisive victories are worth four points, substantial victories two points, marginal victories one point, and draws are worth zero. The side with the most points gets rotated to the rear area for a week of R & R, including all the hot chocolate the troops can drink and unlimited use of the hot tubs.

SCENARIO 1 Game Setup

Lay out the maps as shown. Treat all heavy woods hexes as light woods. Treat all lake and stream hexes as clear terrain.



Defender

4th Century, 5/214th Legion (The Winter Wolves)

Centurion Gerhardt Gustavus, Commander

Leadership Rating: 2

Troop Quality: Elite

1st Platoon

3 Wolverines

2nd Platoon

3 Wolverines

3rd Platoon

3 Vipers

3 bounce infantry squads with TVLGs

Type 4 Installation (without HELL Missiles)

3 bounce infantry squads with TVLGs

1 bounce infantry squad with medium mortar

On-Board Minefields: 3

Off-Board Artillery: 1 fire mission per turn

Deployment

The Renegade player sets up first, anywhere on Map 4. The Type 4 installation is located in Hex 0406. Use a building marker to designate the bunker. The installation's infantry is inside the bunker at the start of the scenario. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Platoons set up anywhere within a five-hex radius of the installation. All vehicles have expended one digging charge and are in craters prior to the start of the game. The infantry squads may begin either mounted or dismounted at the Renegade player's option. The on-board minefields can be set up anywhere on Map 4.

Attacker

1st Century, 6/983rd Legion (The Mailed Fist)

Centurion Alexander Octanvius, Commander

Leadership Rating: 2

Troop Quality: Regular

1st Platoon

3 Horatius

2nd Platoon

3 Horatius

3rd Platoon

3 Romulus

3 bounce infantry squads with TVLGs

1st Platoon, 3rd Century, 1/983rd (attached)

3 Trajans

Off-Board Artillery: 1 fire mission per turn

Deployment

TOG forces may enter anywhere on the northern edge of Map 3, with a starting velocity equal to the vehicle's thrust or less, and any facing or flight mode. All infantry starts mounted in their APCs.

Special Rules: See Special Campaign Rules, above.

Victory Conditions

The object of the TOG player is to destroy the Renegade bunker. The Winter Wolves

must defend their outpost.

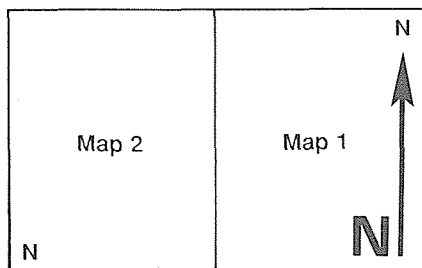
The game lasts until all of one side's units are either destroyed or have exited the map. Any TOG unit that exits any edge other than the northern edge of the map is considered destroyed. Renegade units may exit any edge of the map, and units that exit the northern edge may be used in Scenario 3.

When the game is over, each player adds up his victory points. A vehicle is considered destroyed if it has suffered an ammunition explosion, its crew is dead, or the "Vehicle Destroyed" box is hit. An infantry squad is considered destroyed if it suffers five or more casualties.

The victory level is determined according to the normal *Centurion* rules. The installation counts as 75 points if destroyed.

SCENARIO 2 Game Setup

Lay out the maps as shown. Treat all heavy woods hexes as light woods. Treat all lake and stream hexes as clear terrain.



Defender

4th Century, 6/983rd Legion (The Mailed Fist)

Centurion Marcus Wright, Commander

Leadership Rating: 2

Troop Quality: Regular

1st Platoon

3 Vespasians

2nd Platoon

3 Vespasians

3rd Platoon

3 Lupis

3 bounce infantry squads with TVLGs

Type 3 Installation (without HELL Missiles)

3 bounce infantry squads with TVLGs

1 bounce infantry squad with medium mortar

On-Board Minefields: 3

Off-Board Artillery: 1 fire mission per turn

Deployment

The TOG player sets up first anywhere on Map 1. The Type 3 installation is located in Hex 1407 of Map 1. Use a building marker to designate the bunker. The installation's infantry is inside the bunker at the start of the scenario. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Platoons set up anywhere within a five-hex radius of the installation. All vehicles have expended one digging charge and are in craters prior to the start of the game. The

infantry squads may begin either mounted or dismounted at the TOG player's option. The on-board minefields can be set up anywhere on Map 1.

Attacker

4th Guards Dragoons, 1/214th Legion (The Winter Wolves)

Centurion Maximus Rachael Brown, Commander

Leadership Rating: 3

Troop Quality: Elite

1st Platoon

3 Spartius

3 Bounce Infantry Squads with TVLGs

2nd Platoon

3 Spartius

3 bounce infantry squads with TVLGs

3rd Platoon

3 Deliverers

3rd Platoon, 6th Grav Hussars, 1/214th (attached)

3 Liberators

Off-Board Artillery: 1 fire mission per turn

Deployment

Renegade forces may enter anywhere on the southern edge of Map 2 with a starting velocity equal to the vehicle's thrust or less and any facing or flight mode. All infantry starts mounted in its APCs.

Special Rules: See Special Campaign Rules, above.

Victory Conditions

The object of the Renegade player is to destroy the TOG bunker. The TOG troops must defend their outpost.

The game lasts until all of one side's units are either destroyed or have exited the map. Any Renegade unit that exits any edge other than the southern edge of the map is considered destroyed. TOG units may exit any edge of the map, and units that exit the southern edge may be used again in Scenario 3.

When the game is over, each player adds up his victory points. A vehicle is considered destroyed if it has suffered an ammunition explosion, its crew is dead, or the "Vehicle Destroyed" box is hit. An infantry squad is considered destroyed if it suffers five or more casualties.

The victory level is determined according to the normal *Centurion* rules. The installation counts as 75 points if destroyed.

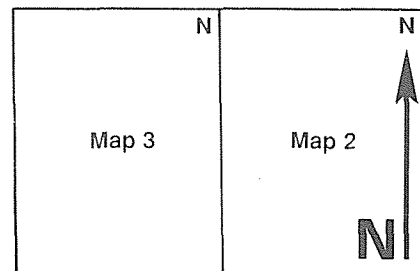
SCENARIO 3

Returning from their raids on the enemy's lines, the two attacking forces run headlong into each other.

Game Setup

Lay out the maps as shown. Treat all heavy woods hexes as light woods. Treat all lake and stream hexes as clear terrain.

RENEGADE LEGION



Defender

1st Century, 6/983rd Legion (The Mailed Fist)

1st Platoon, 3rd Century, 1/983rd (attached)

Centurion Alexander Octavius, Commander

Leadership Rating: 2

Troop Quality: Regular

Surviving units from Scenario 1 and units that exited the southern edge of the map during Scenario 2 are all subject to restrictions found in Special Rules, below.

Deployment

TOG forces may enter anywhere on the southern edge of Map 3 with a starting velocity equal to the vehicle's thrust or less and any facing or flight mode. All infantry starts mounted in its APCs.

Attacker

4th Guards Dragoons, 1/214th Legion (The Winter Wolves)

3rd Platoon, 6th Grav Hussars, 1/214th (attached)

Centurion Maximus Rachael Brown, Commander

Leadership Rating: 3

Troop Quality: Elite

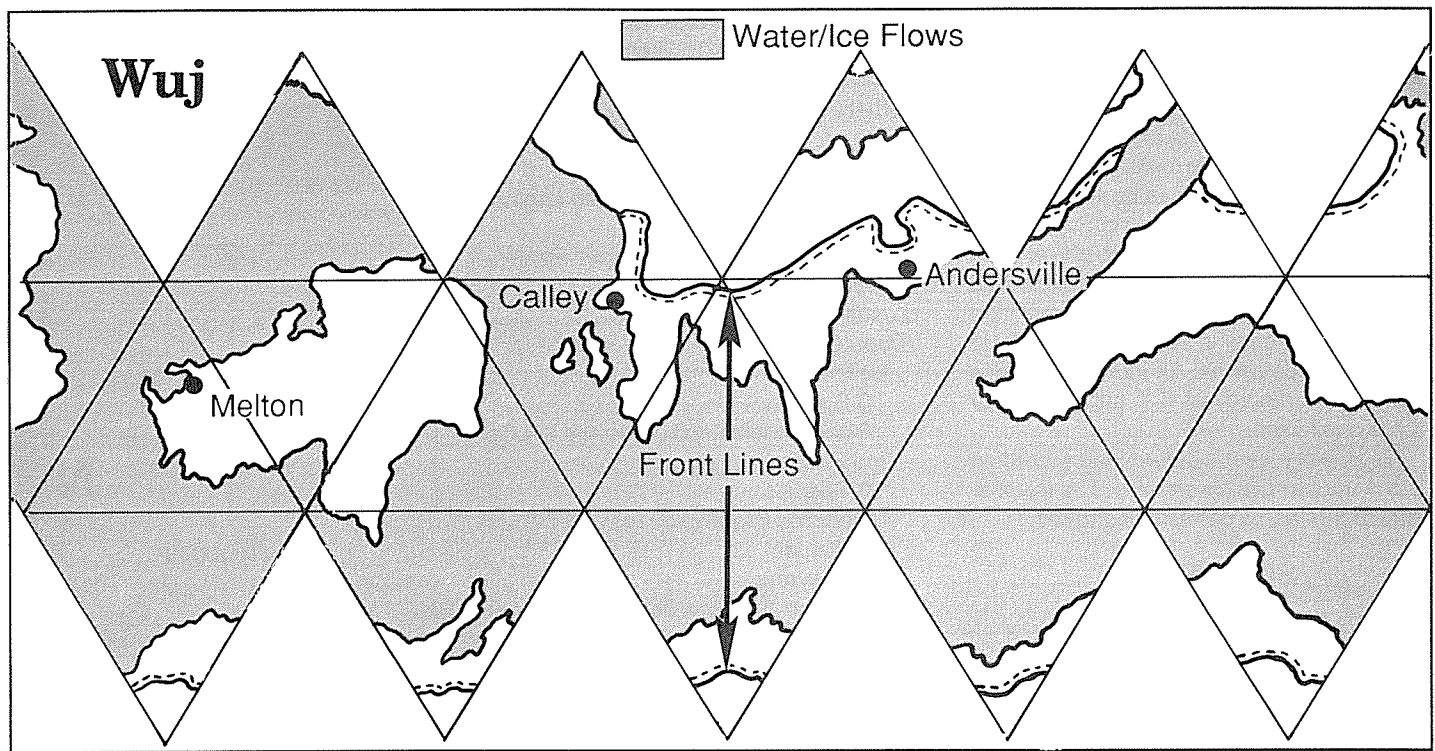
Surviving units from Scenario 2 and units that exited the northern edge of the map during Scenario 1 are all subject to restrictions found in Special Rules, below.

Deployment

Renegade forces may enter anywhere on the northern edge of Map 2 with a starting velocity equal to the vehicle's thrust or less and any facing or flight mode. All infantry starts mounted in its APCs.

Special Rules

1. Renegade and TOG APCs will have their missile racks fully rearmed, but no damage taken in previous scenarios has



been repaired. Tanks from both sides do not carry extra missiles, so they enter this scenario in the exact condition in which they finished the last scenario.

2. All Special Campaign Rules apply.

Victory Conditions

This scenario lasts until one side surrenders the field or all vehicles of one side have been destroyed.

Any Renegade unit that exits the northern edge of the map is considered destroyed. Any TOG unit that exits the southern edge of the map is considered destroyed.

When the game is over, each player adds up his victory points. A vehicle is considered destroyed if it has suffered an ammunition explosion, its crew is dead, or the "Vehicle Destroyed" box is hit. An infantry squad is considered destroyed if it suffers five or more casualties.

The victory level is determined according to the normal *Centurion* rules.

WUJ

Star:	Farhome (F5 yellow-white main sequence)
Terran Registry:	#G-23-321-541-44-I
Planetary System:	4 planets, 1 asteroid belt, 6 major moons
#1 (Zone 2):	Franklin (11,513)
1 Moon:	1 major: Wasteland (1358)
#2 (Zone 4):	Wuj (15, 678)
Orbital Period:	1.61 years
Surface Gravity:	1.21
Rotational Period:	23.34 hours
4 Moons:	1 major: Recourse (2375)
	1 medium
	2 minor

#3 (Zone 5):

#4 (Zone 6):

27 Moons:

#5 (Zone 8):

Note: The parenthetical number following each world and major moon is its diameter in kilometers.

Population: 135,935,987; Human 59%, Naram 28%, Baufrin 8%, KessRith 3%, Other 2%.

Government: Contested; planetwide federal system, with a tricameral legislative body and an executive branch. TOG Occupational Law is in effect in areas controlled by its legions.

Economy: The mainstay of Wuj's economy is exporting agricultural products and frozen water to dry worlds. Light industry exists, but has been largely disrupted by the TOG invasion.

The soil around the equator is very fertile due to naturally occurring bacteria, and although the growing season is relatively short, a large volume of agricultural products is sent to one of the three major export centers twice a year.

Aside from agricultural products, the other major export from Wuj is that of water. Many planets have insufficient water supplies to support large populations, and water must be imported from water rich worlds. Wuj has

Asteroid belt

Markharm (53,053)

4 Major: Niccolo (1793),

Blenheim (2162), Sajer

(1934), Bennett (3245)

8 medium

19 minor (most traceable to asteroidal debris)

Gavron (2459) (escaped moon of Markharm)

a large amount of water in the form of glaciers around both poles. The polar ice caps are extensive, covering large portions of the upper northern and southern hemispheres. Most of this ice is already nearly pure fresh water, meaning that two of the major expenses of water exportation—purification and freezing for transportation—are already accomplished.

Physical Characteristics: The orbit of the planet is an average of 2.16 AUs, and, consequently, the planet's climate is fairly cool. Mean temperatures range from 19-20° C at the equator to a frigid -55° C at the poles. There are four major continents and very few islands in the expansive oceans. Almost 65% of Wuj is covered in water, although a large part of that is frozen over; the unfrozen portion is found in a 500-kilometer band around the equator.

History: Wuj was one of the last systems to be settled in Shannendam County. The original human settlers found the planet's western and northern continents to be fairly hospitable near the equator. The eastern and southern continents are considered very hostile.

Wuj was hard hit by the Snow Plague in 5020. The initial wave killed almost 70% of the settlers within four years. The KessRith found Wuj of little value during their occupation of Shannendam County, and left the human survivors generally to themselves.

Wuj was reclaimed by humanity in 6583 with the signing of the Treaty of M'Dirate. Soon after, more human and Naram settlers arrived to bolster the population. Other races find Wuj an uncomfortable place, and for the most part have not settled here in large numbers. Ω

World Generation



*M*orpheus relies heavily on the referee's imagination and creativity. What happens when you run out of imagination?

One option is to use world generation tables to help spark an idea. While these tables were created with *Morpheus* in mind, they could easily be used for other roleplaying systems.

These tables are intended for "world building," not "planet building." While most *Morpheus* adventures take place on planets, an adventure may run in a localized area of space, another plane or dimension, or one of many other possible areas that do not require the presence of a planet.

USING THE TABLES

As is standard in *Morpheus*, you will need two 10-sided dice to be used as percentile dice. When rolling, a double zero is always considered to be a 100, and on the tables you will see 100s listed.

A set of numbers runs down the left side of each table; on the right side is a corresponding description of what that particular percentage denotes. For example: 21-30 Dangerous. This tells you that rolling a 21 through 30 on your two percentile dice will yield the result "dangerous."

The tables can be run through in any order or a particular table can be skipped if the referee decides that he doesn't need it. As always, if the referee doesn't like the result, then he has the power to reroll it or just change it outright. After all, this is his world, and he can do whatever he wants with it.

Roll on all tables once, with the exception of the Composition Table. Roll on the Composition Table 20 times to represent a wide variety of areas on a planet; each roll assigns 5% of the planet to one type of material. You could shorten this to 10 rolls, but this will skew the composition somewhat.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT

Size: Most of the descriptions here are self-explanatory, with a few exceptions. The result *none* means that there is no planet to be adventuring on. The game could be taking place in deep space or in an area of filled space, like Larry Niven's *The Integral Trees*. *Extra large* means that the planet is the size of a gas giant, and *super large* means that the surface area of the planet is the size of a sun. In such an instance, the game could be running inside a Dyson sphere or on a ringworld or other monstrous construction.

Atmosphere: *Exceedingly hostile* could mean any one of a number of things (high radiation, hard vacuum, or volcano heat,

By Devin Durham

perhaps), but in any case it is assumed that the environment is such that dream warriors cannot normally exist in it. Every *combat* turn (each second) that a dream warrior remains exposed to this environment will constitute an attack upon his defenses, the strength of which is determined by the referee (but it should be enough to really hurt).

Hostile is the same as *exceedingly hostile*, just not as bad. The attacks described above should happen, but not to as severe a degree. Most often hostile environments are not much more than nuisances, and they can often be defeated by a passive defense.

Dangerous is just that. Perhaps if the characters are exposed to the air for too long, they will develop a disease or the like. Dangerous environments should be easy to deal with.

Normal. What can I say? Normal.

Dense atmospheres are just heavy. They may have water suspended in them or have an incredibly high oxygen content. What is called for here is some device that makes breathing it a chore, but not impossible.

Limited contact is the most deadly of all the atmospheres. Usually, exposure to a limited contact environment for longer than a set amount of time (referee set) will result in death. There may be hideous toxins, or some other such nasty present, but limited contact atmospheres are always deadly with time.

Temperature: The various temperatures have no real effect on the game other than to add a certain amount of realism. It is assumed that the characters can deal with most variances in temperature.

Gravity: Different gravities will affect the characters in all sorts of ways—reduced or enhanced fatigue, ability to carry different loads, etc. The exact effects of the different gravities are left up to the referee, but description of the two more extreme results follow.

Very heavy gravity is of such an intensity that life is not normally supported. Characters will find movement difficult, and life forms that would evolve under such circumstances would be very bizarre. Adventuring in very heavy gravities is very tiring, and possibly lethal, since a mere fall could kill you.

Super heavy gravity is a Jovian or solar gravity. It is impossible to support life in any form with such a gravity. It is likely, then, that the inhabitants of such a world have discov-

ered ways to counter the gravity. Special antigravity plates, for example, or perhaps very powerful spells. The possibility definitely exists that the characters could accidentally void whatever protection that they have, resulting in their almost-instantaneous deaths.

Composition: Keep in mind that this table is descriptive of the planet's surface only—especially that portion of it which is in easy reach of the inhabitants (not more than two miles under the surface). A significant portion of planetary composition as generated by this table will be water. The rest of the results describe what makes up the landmasses. A planetary composition description generated by this method might read: "25% water and 75% landmass, which is comprised of 20% dirt/stone/rock, 10% lava, 10% liquid metals, 10% hard metals, 10% soft metals, 5% organic materials, 5% radioactive material, and 5% explosive compounds."

Notice that it is very possible that a planet could end up lacking hard metals, or organic materials, or any one of the items on the chart. The inhabitants of the planet would just not have access to the missing element, and that could drastically affect their civilization. A technologically advanced society that has few (or no) hard metals may have to synthesize materials to take their place or perhaps they import the metals. On the other hand, a planet made up mostly of explosive compounds would not be a good place to smoke a cigarette.

RACE GENERATION

Type: Descriptive of the race's general appearance. The referee should create whatever race he wants off of these stats. If he wants a race of green-eyed, blue-lipped fish people, then so be it.

Humanoid: Humans, or human like.

Anthropomorphic: The race is human in appearance, but was evolved from something other than an ape. Cats are a popular choice, but feel free to make whatever kind of race you've always wanted to see. I've always felt that a race of shark people would be real interesting to interact with.

Plant: People based on plants. They may be mobile or may not be.

Reptilian: This type of race is most likely what the Earth would be populated with if it were not for that big asteroid.

Water-Based: The citizens of this world live in the water. They might be amphibious. Perhaps they carry a water supply with them wherever they go.

Crystalline: People based on crystals.

Keep in mind that this does *not* mean that they are brittle. They could be, for instance, humans based on silicon rather than carbon.

Insect: Guess what? The fly lives!

Avian: Bird people. Perhaps they fly, perhaps not.

Gaseous: Beings that are not totally solid. They might appear as mists above a pond, or they might be more solid than that and be able to move about under their own power. They also could be extradimensional, and this gaseous form is the form that they take while in this dimension.

Sonic: This race would be based on sound or vibration. An odd idea, I'll admit, but odd things happen in an infinite universe.

Gelatinous: Attack of the blob people from planet Q. This race could be blobs, or it could be composed of shape changers. All this result means is that they have no defined shape and are somewhat "squishy."

Atmospheric: These entities could best be described as cloud people, but this is not a rule. Atmospheric could mean that the race lives permanently in the clouds, or at least above the ground.

Multiform Race: This race is a combination of more than one of the attributes listed above. Roll twice on the table, ignoring a roll if you roll the same thing twice. If you get this result again, add one more roll to the total that you need to roll. For example, if you rolled multiform twice, you would need to make a total of three rolls on this table.

Multiracial World: There is more than one intelligent species on this planet. Roll up two complete races. If you roll this result again during the process of rolling up the races, then add another race, much like the process described previously under Multiform Race.

Attitude: Describes the prevalent attitude that could be used to describe the race. Remember that this is a generalization—certain individuals in any race will be radically different than the norm. Of the descriptions, only one needs further explanation:

Vegetative: Worse than lethargic, vegetative races most often refuse to do anything, even recognize their environment. This is not a normal attitude for a sentient race, and maybe something strange or catastrophic has happened that would send an entire world into this type of withdrawal.

Reaction to Dream Warriors: This attribute describes how (as a general rule) this race will react to the revelation that the characters are dream warriors.

Common: Ignored. Dream warriors are a common part of everyday life and have been accepted as part of society. No one cares if someone is a dream warrior or not, and one using his powers usually goes by unnoticed (unless a law is broken or some such thing).

Common: Hated, Feared. Dream war-

riors are a common sight, and the general public wishes that you would go away. They will often express this desire violently, making it dangerous to reveal yourself.

Common: Loved. Dream warriors are a common part of everyday life, and everyone is glad that it is so. Perhaps a dream warrior helped the race in the past, or maybe it just likes the kind of things they can do.

Uncommon: Curious. Dream warriors are not unheard of, but are not an everyday occurrence. The race hasn't made up its mind about dream warriors yet, but is interested in learning more about them.

Uncommon: Hated, Feared. Dream warriors show up once in a great while, but even that is too often!

Unknown. The race has never seen nor heard of dream warriors before. Reaction will vary depending upon the individual member of the race and the circumstances under which the dream warrior is met.

Government Level: Descriptive of the organization of the government and its influence upon the lives of its subjects.

Race Specifics: An optional section designed to assist you in determining the attributes of a race.

TECHNOLOGY

This is a set of two tables intended to give you an idea of how technologically advanced a race is and what its technology is based on.

Technology Level: This table gives a level of technology that the planet would loosely fit into. This is intended to be a guideline, not a rigid rule.

Stone Age: The race has not developed any sort of technology other than rudimentary tools for killing and harvesting. There may be small communities which are usually made up of relatives. The possibility exists that the race had once reached a higher technology level and then regressed back for some reason.

Sword Age: The Sword Age is descriptive of most of humanity's existence until a few hundred years ago. Sword Age technologies usually have cities, nations, writing and some degree of civilization. Guns do not exist yet, but there may be areas that have discovered gunpowder. The main form of travel will be by animal or boat. Notice that a technology based on, say, psychic energies may not even have swords—duels may be resolved with mind blasts of approximately sword-like damage.

Preindustrial: The world from about 1700 to 1850 was preindustrial. A variety of new discoveries and weapons of war are beginning to take effect upon the world. Guns, cannons, new types of farm equipment, and other aspects of technology are beginning to spring forth. At this time, however, there are no factories and no wide-scale public distri-

bution of the new technologies.

Industrial: The distinctive feature denoting the arrival of the industrial revolution on Earth was the building of factories. Technologies that are based on other things than science will go through this same phase, but the factory may or may not have an important part in it. The main result of an industrial age is that product becomes readily available to the average citizen. The technologies involved would seem fairly primitive by our own standards, but that will change soon, for the industrial age is a stepping stone to the next level, the technological explosion.

Technological Explosion: This term is descriptive of our current technological state. New inventions are being made each day, and advances are incredible. In game play, the technology of a world that is going through a technological explosion would equal Earth anywhere from 1930 to 2000. The exact details are up to the referee, and it is possible that the spectrum of technology will vary widely from what the norm is here on Earth. For example, a world may know nothing about transportation and still walk about on foot, but have a medical knowledge far beyond anything on Earth. Citizens going through a technological explosion have access to the latest technologies and are to the point where they are not continually amazed by new discoveries.

High Technology: High-tech worlds are advanced. They use the same basic technologies that we are using now (in game terms, those of the early 21st century), but are much more sophisticated. In essence, a person from our era could probably recognize what is going on and why it is happening, but the machines (brain power, ritual, whatever) involved will be much more efficient and advanced than he would normally be used to.

Super Technology: Worlds with super technology would be so advanced as to be completely beyond understanding. Citizens of these worlds would have every luxury available to them, and seldom stop to think about the advances that their race has made. They have been immersed in technology for so long that they have no idea of what it would be like to be without it.

Technology Type: The technology type results describe what the world's technology is based upon. In *Morpheus*, science is not the only way to advance your knowledge, and it is very possible that a world will have moved along another direction. Regardless of what the technology is based upon, the end result is the same: Even if magic were what our technology was based upon, then we would still have things like radios and computers and digital watches, but instead of being constructed, plugged in or designed, they might be conjured, animated or dis-

charged. One thing to keep in mind is that even though a world will have one type of technology as its primary type, other types may still be present at a lower level.

Science: Our world is based on science. Other science-based worlds would be similar to ours.

Magic: This world's technology is based on magic. On the higher tech worlds, it is very possible that each person is a very potent wizard.

Psychic: The development and implementation of psychic powers are what this world's technology is based upon.

Mystical: The motive force behind this world's achievements are deific or emanate from an astral plane. Religious ceremony is what makes things run, and the practitioners get results. These are generally not the people that you would want on your bad side.

Artifact: These worlds once had a thriving technology, and then either one race died out and was replaced with another, or the original race fell into a period of barbarism. The current race and technology level is supported by discovering the secrets of the old technology.

Some races might use the artifacts themselves, while other artifact-based races may study the artifacts and attempt to duplicate them.

The thrust of this world is not to invent new ideas, but to rediscover the ones that were lost before.

WORLD GENERATION Size

Roll	Result
01-10	None
11-20	Asteroidal
21-30	Moon
31-40	Large moon, small planet
41-80	Earth-sized
81-90	Large
91-95	Extra large
96-100	Super large

Atmosphere/Environment

Roll	Result
01-10	Exceedingly hostile
11-20	Hostile
21-30	Dangerous
31-90	Normal
91-95	Dense
96-100	Limited contact

Temperature

Roll	Result
01-10	Sub-freezing
11-20	Freezing
21-70	Comfortable
71-80	Balmy
81-90	Hot
91-100	Desert heat

Gravity

Roll	Result
01-10	None
11-20	Light
21-80	Earth normal (1G)
81-90	Heavy
91-95	Very heavy
96-100	Super heavy

Composition

Roll	Result
00-30	Water
31-35	Organic materials
36-65	Dirt, rock, stone
66-70	Hard metals
71-75	Radioactive materials
76-80	Soft metals
81-85	Explosive compounds
86-88	Lava
89-91	Poisons
92-94	Liquid metals
95-96	Odd-property metals
97-98	Noxious substances
99-100	Narcotic compounds

RACE GENERATION Type

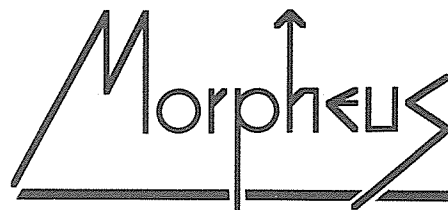
Roll	Result
01-40	Humanoid
41-50	Anthropomorphic
51-60	Plant
61-70	Reptilian
71-75	Water-based
76-80	Crystalline
81-85	Insect
86-90	Avian
91-92	Gaseous
92-93	Sonic
94-95	Gelatinous
96-97	Atmospheric
98-99	Multiform race
100	Multiracial world

Attitude

Roll	Result
01-10	Lethargic
11-20	Industrious
21-30	Warlike
31-40	Peaceful
41-50	Philosophers
51-60	Vegetative
61-70	Hateful
71-80	Suspicious
81-90	Curious
91-100	Experimenters

Reaction to Dream Warriors

Roll	Result
01-20	Common: Ignored
21-40	Common: Hated, feared
41-60	Common: Loved
61-70	Uncommon: Curious
71-80	Uncommon: Hated, feared
81-100	Unknown



Government

Roll	Result
01-20	Anarchy
21-40	Weakly established
41-60	Well-regulated and policed
61-80	Stifling
81-100	Iron-fisted

Race Specifics

Roll	Size	Roll	Hit Points
01-20	Small	01-05	5
21-70	Man-sized	06-60	10
71-90	Large	61-70	21
91-100	Huge	71-80	30
		81-90	40
		91-100	50
Roll	Ego	Roll	Material Defense
01-10	75	01-05	0
11-80	100	06-60	1
81-95	150	61-70	5
96-100	200	71-80	10
		81-90	20
		91-100	30

Roll	Strength
01-05	Force= $-\frac{1}{2}$ *
05-55	Force=0
56-80	Force=1
81-95	Force=2
96-100	Force=3

*Equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of level zero, meaning lifting and carrying are a maximum of 75 pounds.

TECHNOLOGY LEVEL

Roll	Result
01-14	Stone Age
15-29	Sword Age
30-44	Preindustrial
45-59	Industrial
60-74	Technological explosion
75-89	High technology
90-100	Super technology

TECHNOLOGY TYPE

Roll	Result
01-20	Science
21-40	Magic
41-60	Psychic
61-80	Mystical
81-100	Artifact Ω

Morpheus by Devin Durham is published by Rapport Games. In this "RPG of the Mind's Eye," neural links allow gamers to recline on couches within the MindPark and dream of adventures where they have control over the abilities of their characters, even in combat. Characters from the future walk with figures from the past and even other dimensions.

CHALLENGE *Reviews*

Roadstriker review by Craig Sheeley.
GURPS Aliens review by David L. Pulver.

Roadstriker II

R. Talsorian Games.
\$10.00.

Writers: Mike Pondsmith, Derek Quintanar and Clive Hendrik.

Editing: Derek Quintanar, Lisa Pondsmith and Ted Talsorian.

72-page supplement to *Mekton II*. Also applicable to *Cyberpunk* and *Cyberpunk 2020*.

For gamemasters and players.

Roadstriker II is a revision of the supplement *Roadstriker*, the first supplement to R. Talsorian Games' mecha combat and roleplaying game, *Mekton*. For those who own the original *Roadstriker*, *Roadstriker II* will seem like familiar territory, covering the construction of small, usually transformable, mecha, rules for building large, transformable mecha, and combat rules for the smaller roadstrikers (as well as an adventure using roadstrikers for *Mekton* players).

Roadstriker II expands *Mekton II*, a roleplaying game and wargame concentrating on mecha, the oversized and generally humanoid-shaped war machines made popular by immense amounts of Japanese animation. Rather than establishing a solid background for these mecha stories after the fashion of *Battletech*'s well-documented universe, *Mekton II* offers background advice, extending the game system's use to any type of mecha anime-style ("anime" referring to the transforming robots who change from one thing to another, like the Transformers™ children's toys) adventure desired. Of course, for those who don't want to make up their own *Mekton* universe or those wanting a pregenerated universe, the writers outlined the world of Algol, with warring nations and high-tech armies suitable for mecha combats. The two adventures in *Roadstriker II* are set on Algol. *Roadstriker II* adds more depth to the possibilities of *Mekton II* by adding rules for roadstrikers, small (seven- to 15-foot-tall) mecha more suited to urban environments and actual roleplaying than the mektons, walking tanks rated in tens of tons, more at home in heavy, full combat situations.

The supplement leads off with campaign material about who uses roadstrikers and why. Algolian police, one set of primary roadstriker users, are even better equipped than a Mega-City Judge from *Judge Dredd*—not many Judges have a car or motorcycle that changes into a suit of powered armor with an energy gun or autocannon to back up the command, "Freeze!" Soldiers also use the mobile suits for greater mobility and firepower. Unfortunately for the police and the soldiers, often their enemies have roadstrikers, too.

Like *Roadstriker*, *Roadstriker II* contains a great deal of information on the roadstrikers themselves, including rules on construction, combat and play. With *Roadstriker II*, mecha-jocks have more mobility than they do in their normal war machines—a roadstriker is faster, lighter and

smaller, and can pack as much punch as a small mekton. And some new types are added in this new supplement—formerly, only wheeled vehicles and pure powered-armor suits were available for *Mekton II*. Now beastrikers (animal-shaped mecha), aerostriders (aircraft mecha) and seastriders (boats and submarines) are available. Armor is heavier (a distinct necessity). New gadgets like ECM, flight-capable jump jets and the 75mm rifle add to these new mechas' usefulness. The process of mecha design is easy and swift, without the occasional error that plagues *Mekton II*'s construction rules (like the incomplete mecharider table, for instance). Those used to the old *Roadstriker* will find the new rules easy to follow, since there are only a few additions.

NEW INFORMATION

Roadstriker II is more than just rules rewriting. All of the features of the original *Roadstriker* are written into the supplement, along with yet more material. An entire new rules section is devoted to the construction of "combining roadstrikers," small mechavehicles which transform and merge to become large, humanoid fighting machines. These transformed combiners are quite capable of taking on another mekton, thereby proving that a roadstriker's best option regarding mektons is a mass attack—combiners merely employ their numbers somewhat differently!

Revised rules for advanced transformable mektons add to the regular *Mekton II* rules. The revisions are seemingly minor, but make a big difference to some mektons—the cost formula is new, for instance, and there are changes in the way transformables function. These rules are vital if a "true" transformer mekton is desired.

The adventures in *Roadstriker II* are new and somewhat devious, requiring thought and planning on the part of the players; trigger-happy types may be in a great deal of trouble. Just because a person wears a suit of powered armor doesn't make him invulnerable—not when the enemy has equal technology. Both of the new adventures are set in the *Mekton II* Algol universe. One adventure is a police story, with the players trying to stop a gang war that threatens to develop into a major and indiscriminate conflict. The other adventure is a military mission to coordinate and command guerrilla action on an occupied island—sort of a mecha version of a Central American conflict.

CYBERPUNK CONVERSIONS

Finally comes the one and one-half page section everyone will buy the supplement for—the *Cyberpunk* conversions! Statistics are given here to convert roadstriker weapons and armor into *Cyberpunk* terms. The idea of miniature mektons in *Cyberpunk* may intimidate some referees—after all, *Cyberpunk* is deadly enough without powered armor and antitank weapons. However, a lot of anime source material uses small mecha in distinctly cyberpunk-genre worlds (the *Bubble-Gum Crisis* series and the *Megazone 23* movies being the best known). And certainly the corporate types and cops are enhanced by the hard-

ware. Few street samurai are going to try to shoot their way out of an arrest when the police are wearing Mk IV powersuits and hauling 20mm autocannons (like from *Bubble-Gum Crisis*). Of course, if the cops can get them, the crooks can, too....

The *Cyberpunk* conversions perpetuate the same old problem with that system's discrepancy between heavy weapons and small arms. For instance, a miniature LAW rocket only does 2d10 damage, and a 75mm hyper-velocity cannon only does 5d10 (an average of 27.5 points). Meanwhile, a NATO-style rifle still does 11d6+2 (average damage 40.5 points). Clearly a major problem here is still unresolved.

Cyberpunk GMs looking for a little more muscle in their campaigns can make use of it, even without the *Mekton II* rules. *Roadstriker II* contains a wealth of good information for the *Mekton II* referee or player. Remember, a mekton can even haul along a roadstriker as cargo—a handy survival package.

CONCLUSION

The only problem with the main text is perhaps that there is not enough information on roadstrikers. What happened to the truck-class striker? Why not more gadgets, like extended weapon magazines and over-the-shoulder heavy guns? (A glance through the *Car Wars* *Uncle Al's* catalogs might have added some good material.) Advice on roleplaying with roadstrikers would have been useful—surely the things don't maneuver as well as unencumbered humans. *Roadstriker II* is much better than the original, but it lacks the detail present in a *Robotech* or *Battletech* supplement. Finally, R. Talsorian Games might consider hiring an artist to do their scenario maps. Their Macintosh graphics are clumsy and dirty.

Roadstriker II is a quite adequate updating of the original *Roadstriker*. It's reasonably priced, too, considering that it's thicker than the original, with more information and better illustrations. If you play *Mekton II*, I suggest you get it—roadstrikers provide an entirely new arena for mecha roleplay.

GURPS Aliens

Steve Jackson Games.
\$16.95

Design: Chris McCubbin
128-page softcover book.
Requires *GURPS Basic Set*.

GURPS Aliens is a complete sourcebook on extraterrestrials, intended for use with *GURPS Space*, *GURPS Horror* or *GURPS Supers*. The first 24 pages are devoted to guidelines on setting up alien races and using them in the campaign; the rest of the book details 28 alien civilizations.

Since *GURPS* is a point-based system, the alien design rules treat an alien's differences from humanity as a package of "racial" abilities and disabilities—nearly 100 new advantages and disadvantages, each fully described with its own point cost (positive or negative). Combined with

rules for attribute modifiers and racial skills, *GURPS Aliens* enables the GM to create (and more importantly, define in precise game terms) nearly any race he wishes. For example, a race of small, chlorine-breathing pseudo-arachnids might have ST-3, DX+1, HT-2, the advantages of Clinging, Extra Limbs, Hive Mind, Racial Memory, Venom, and the disadvantages of Anaerobic (poisoned by oxygen), Fragile, and Short Lifespan, and the racial skill of Weaving at IQ+3.

The racial design rules are shown off to good effect in the sample aliens provided. Each race has a description that covers physical appearance, game statistics, homeworld, psychology, ecology, culture, and politics. Highly useful sidebars discuss the race's suggested campaign role, their suitability as PCs, and the point costs for all racial abilities. The rules also provide a fully described sample character, enabling that race to be integrated into a GM's own universe with a minimum of difficulty.

My only problem with the racial descriptions lies in the "politics" section, which seemed to make the assumption that every race exists within a cooperative multispecies galactic civilization. Although easy enough to change, it's a little irritating in a supplement primarily designed for *GURPS Space*, which is oriented toward the referee who wants to design his own universe. A more generic approach, like that taken in the *GURPS Space Atlas* series, might have been preferable.

ALIEN DESCRIPTIONS

Most of the aliens described in *GURPS Aliens* are an interesting, believable lot. The symbiotic Memer/Saret with their weird but plausible bio-

chemistry and leaking tramp freighters, the culture-mimicking Fasanni, the curious Mmm hive mind, and the artistic, primitive Tamile slugs are all different in mind as well as body. A personal favorite of mine are the immortal Encai: beautiful, hedonistic elf-children who sell longevity drugs and designer clones throughout the galaxy.

There are some lumps of coal among the diamonds: the one-dimensional Kronin warriors are boring, while the evil Kaa snake-men and pig-faced An Phar are just a bit too much like anthropomorphic animals. Sometimes the science is a little dodgy as well. For instance, the Cidi are an eight-inch-tall race of teddy bears, which are highly intelligent, but too often patronized as "cute" by humans. This race is a neat idea, but ignores the main problem with very tiny races—because of their high surface-area-to-mass ratio, a rat-sized being must eat constantly just to avoid losing body heat, leaving little time to develop a civilization. I'd recommend giving them the Glut-tony disadvantage (higher metabolic rate) as a concession to realism.

Although there are enough realistic aliens to keep GMs of hard SF campaigns happy, *GURPS Aliens* also includes several races that are just plain weird and are more suitable for space opera or superhero campaigns. These include beings of "pure mind," life-draining energy vampires, and enigmatic traders from the fourth-dimension. Oddly, there are

no chlorine breathers or gas giant-dwelling races, strange omissions since many scientists believe such environments could support life.

Considerable space is spent describing how each race can be used by the GM to its best effect. Some races are intended to fill specific campaign roles: allies, mysterious patrons, traders, or rivals. A couple are what E.E. "Doc" Smith would have dubbed "enemies of civilization"—the depictions of the parasitic Riders, insane Markann and disgusting Verm are particularly chilling. Struggling to defeat a Verm or Rider infestation would be a memorable challenge to any team of adventurers—if it survived the experience!

CONCLUSION

GURPS Aliens' imaginative array of extraterrestrial races coupled with its lucid organization makes it a pleasure to read and to use. I have no hesitation in giving it a whole-hearted recommendation, not only as an invaluable sourcebook for *GURPS*, but as a useful source of ideas for any science-fiction RPG. Ω

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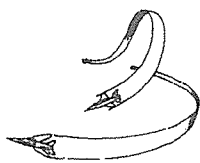
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PLAYTESTERS NEEDED for PBM one-on-one wargame in developmental stages. Tactical level—player controls individual troopers and tanks. High-tech, near-future setting: laser rifles, powered armor, etc. For a detailed game description, send SASE to Solaris Gaming, 446 Wallen Hills Drive #8, Fort Wayne, IN 46825. (48)

SEEKING GAMERS in the east Arkansas/Memphis, TN area. I play and run numerous SF and fantasy RPGs, as well as boardgames and miniatures. Contact John Marron, PO Box 241, Parkin, AR 72373. (48)

RITA C. FLEISCHMANN—are you out there? You wrote to me in May 1989. Please contact Rich-

ard Talbot, 13 Dunmar Crescent, ALLOA, Clackmannshire, SCOTLAND FK10 2EJ. (48)

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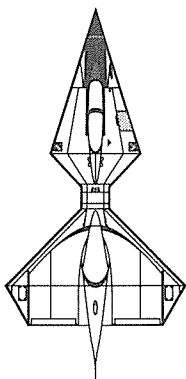
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PHOTOCOPIES/ORIGINALS of out-of-print *FASA Star Trek* items. *FASA* numbers 2009, 2010, 2015, 2016, 2103, 2205, 2207, 2227, 2229, 2304, 2802, 2803, and 3001. Willing to pay reasonable price or trade photocopies of out-of-print *FASA Star Trek* items. Send list to Peter Santucci, 24 Thorndale Place, Thorndale, PA 19372. (48)

PARSEC, a new **MegaTraveller** newsletter. First issue now available for \$2/issue, \$8/one-year subscription. Also produce other materials for use with **MegaTraveller**. Write to Charles Ryckman, 21211 West Ten Mile, Apt. 115, Southfield, MI 48075. (47)

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Don't miss our 50th-issue extravaganza in May. Includes a special index of **Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society** and **Challenge** articles from issue 1 through the present.

Twilight: 2000

Solve the mystery of a river suddenly turned dry in "Water Rights," plus "Woods," a **Twilight** miniadventure.

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Search for a kidnapped baron in "No Time To Rest." Plus "Law in the Imperium" and the continuation of "Behind Blue Eyes."

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Encounter the armed forces of "Thymiamata: 1889."

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Used Car Lot (Twilight)	3.2
Blue Feather (MegaTraveller)	3.6
Two Small Steps (MegaTraveller)	3.8
Baker's Dozen (MegaTraveller)	3.6
Special Psionics (MegaTraveller)	3.8
Horror (Cadillacs & Dinosaurs)	3.5
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Character Creation (Toprg)	3.1
The Ultra-Tech File (GURPS)	3.5
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This issue's interior art	3.4
This issue as a whole	4.0

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What kind of artist would come up with a low gravity beach holiday? Phil Morrissey, that's who! The Aslan beauty looks only mildly perturbed at getting wet, but the hivers see this as an arcane trading ritual (we think). But then who can ever fathom what a hiver is really thinking? (Or Phil, for that matter.)



This Elven netrunner drawn from Jeff Laubenstein's imagination doesn't look like she's particularly happy to be reporting on the water temperature in the Sound from its floor. Maybe she had an unfortunate run-in with Etienne La Plante's goons.



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I feel more secure with the Great Cthulhu guarding my life, don't you? And just what is that Dark Young of Shub Niggurath doing in the trees? Only Earl Geier, who did this piece for Chaosium, knows.



Although this soldier is obviously armed and ready for action, we wonder how she kept the M16 with M203 GL that she seems so proud of dry. While the piece was done for **Twilight: 2000**, some people have suggested *Machos Women with Guns™* was more on Paul Daly's mind. Paul?



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D.J. Barr, in her unique style, portrays the collision of two cultures in the horrified looks of these Victorian and Hill Martian women. Food Extruders™ (Home of the Foot-Long Hard-Boiled Egg) is the perfect match for the taste of the Kafer in the background, however.



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Illustration by Bob Dvorak



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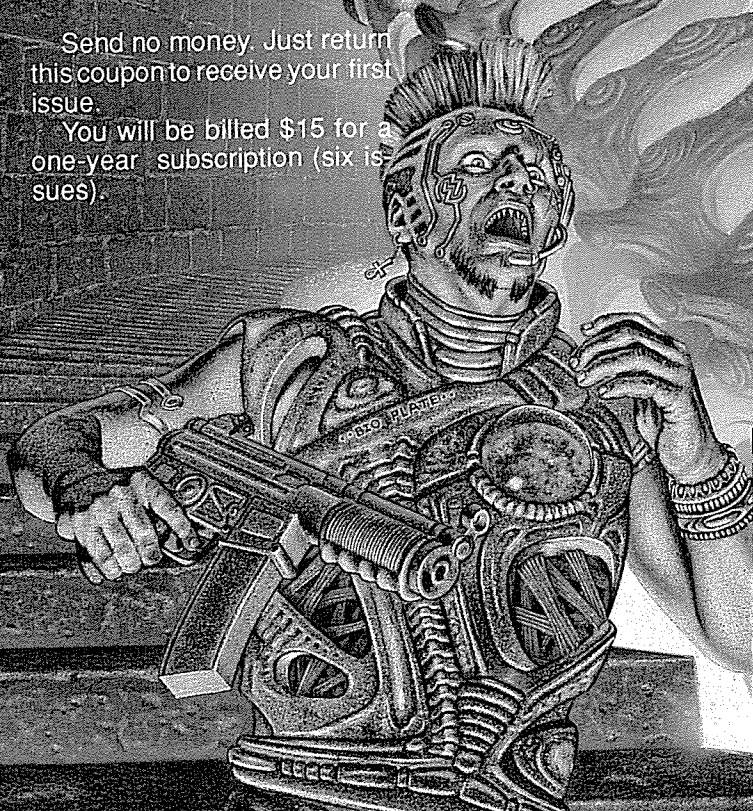
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